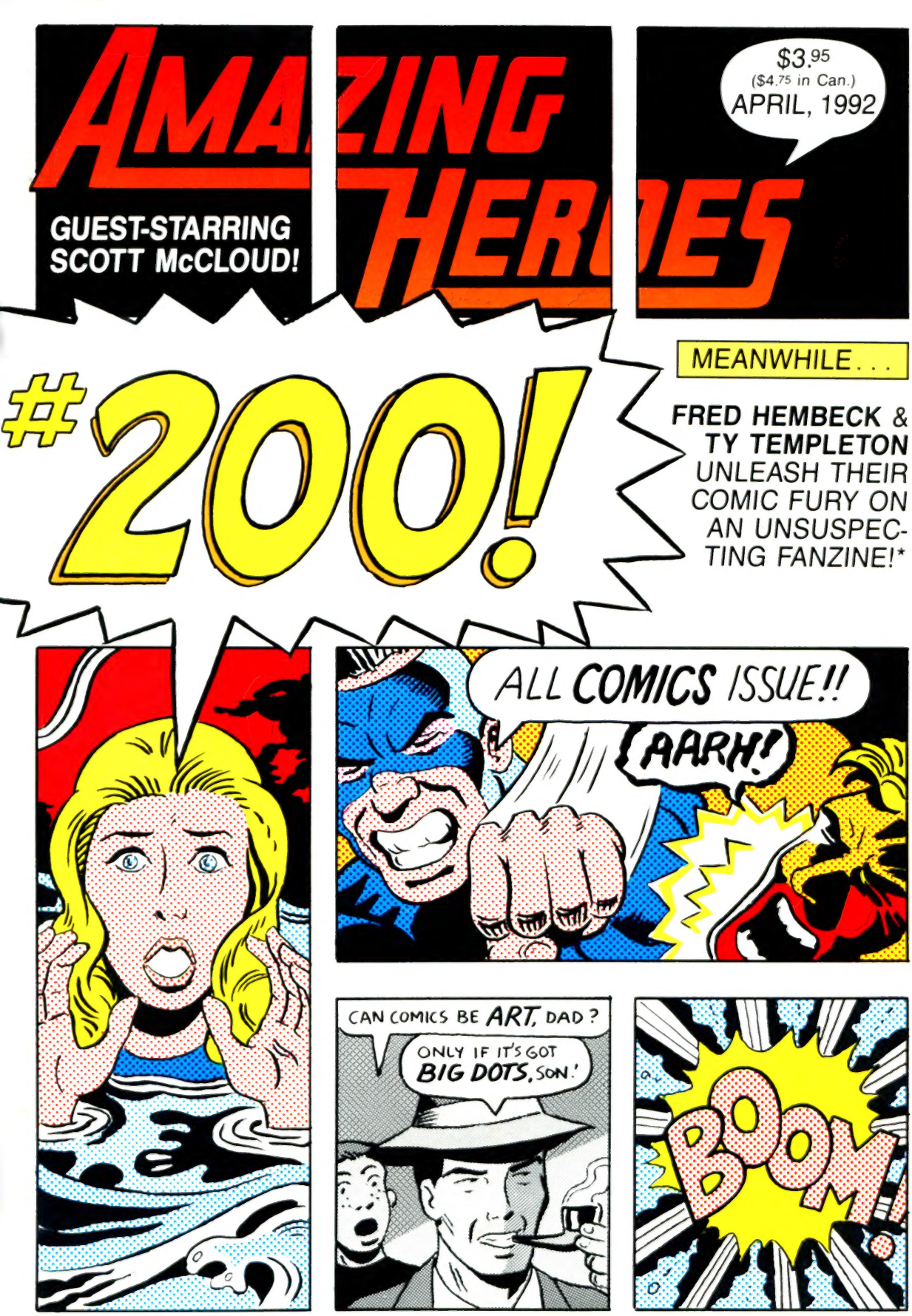

AMAZING HEROES
GUEST-STARRING SCOTT McCLOUD!
$3.95 ($4.75 in Can.) APRIL, 1992
#200!
MEANWHILE . . .
FRED HEMBECK & TY TEMPLETON UNLEASH THEIR COMIC FURY ON AN UNSUSPECTING FANZINE!*
ALL COMICS ISSUE!!
AARH!
CAN COMICS BE ART, DAD?
ONLY IF IT'S GOT BIG DOTS, SON!
BOOM!
SCOTT McLICHTENCLOUD

* YOU FORGOT TO MENTION **BRIAN BUNIAK, LARRY MARDER, CHAS GILLEN, MARK MARTIN, MATT FEAZELL, PAT MORIARITY & TERI S. WOOD!**

—Kibitzin' Kim

EDITORIAL

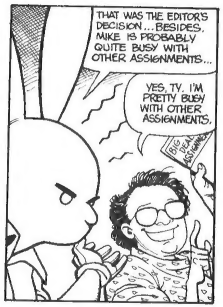
BY TOM HARRINGTON
CARTOONS BY PAT MORIARITY

WELCOME TO AMAZING HEROES #TWO HUNDRED!! IT'S OUR "ALL COMICS" ISSUE!
NOW, OOOOFFF!.. YOU MIGHT BE ASKING, WHY ARE THEY DOING COMICS IN A MAGAZINE THAT'S SUPPOSED TO BE ABOUT COMICS?
KICK OR BASH
OBLIGATORY FIGHT SCENE
WELL, WE RECENTLY DID A BIG EXTRAVAGANZA FOR OUR TENTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE, SO I WANTED THE 200TH ISSUE TO BE SOMETHING... DIFFERENT.
OH, TOM!
OBLIGATORY LOVE SCENE
THEN, FOR AMAZING HEROES NUMBER 194, ADAM-TROY CASTRO TURNED IN A COMICS VERSION OF HIS COLUMN "INFERNAL GALL". THIS WASN'T NEW - I'D PREVIOUSLY RUN A FEATURE AND SOME PERSPECTIVES THAT WERE COMICS.
WEARS UNDERWEAR IN SHOWER.
OBLIGATORY SHOWER SCENE
BUT IT GOT ME THINKING - WHY NOT DO A WHOLE ISSUE OF COMICS? NOT JUST COLUMNS, BUT FEATURES TOO?
SNIFF
LIL' TOMMY
OBLIGATORY ORIGIN SCENE
AFTER ALL, IT'S NOT JUST A GIMMICK. WE ALL KNOW THAT COMICS IS A GREAT MEDIUM FOR JOURNALISM AND PERSONAL EXPRESSION, OR WE WOULDN'T BE COMICS FANS.
SPLAT
OBLIGATORY COMIC RELIEF
ANYWAY, ONCE WE ARRANGED FOR GREAT CARTOONISTS LIKE SCOTT MCCLOUD, FRED HEMBECK AND THE REST TO APPEAR~
I KNEW IT WOULD BE A MEMORABLE EVENT.
RAY GUN
OBLIGATORY DEATH SCENE
OH, AND SPECIAL THANKS TO MY ROOMMATE PAT MORIARITY FOR ILLUSTRATING THIS... ..EDIT..ORIAL ..GURGLE..
MY PLEASURE, TOM.
SHOVE
OBLIGATORY CAMEO
SAY, I'VE GOT A BOOK OF MY OWN COMIN' OUT SOON. LEMME TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT...
CLUNK
THE END
OBLIGATORY PLUG

GREAT SCOTT! 28

A sneak preview of Scott (*Zot, Destroy!*) McCloud's upcoming Tundra project—a book on comics in comic book format!

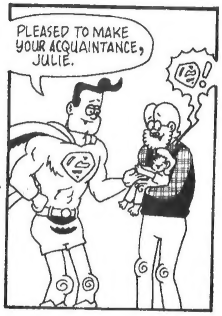
preview by Scott McCloud


THAT WAS THE EDITOR'S DECISION... BESIDES, MIKE IS PROBABLY QUITE BUSY WITH OTHER ASSIGNMENTS...
YES, TY. I'M PRETTY BUSY WITH OTHER ASSIGNMENTS.
DEADLINE

"YOU KNOW, I'M YOUR #1 FAN" 48

Like all talented, successful cartoonists, Ty Templeton has met fans both good and bad. Of course, the bad ones are more fun to talk about.

feature by Ty Templeton



SUPERMAN, MY BABY, AND ME 53

Fred Hembeck, who could claim to be the "originator" of the comics-about-comics format, introduces the world's youngest Superman fan.

Dateline: @?#! by Fred Hembeck

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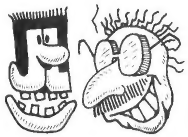
HOLLYWOOD WAS ROCKED BY A 'CATFIGHT AT THE WARNER CORRAL,' DURING THE FILMING OF THE SOON-TO-BE CLASSIC, BATMAN RETURNS.
BRINGING US THE TREMENDOUSLY THRILLING STORY IS OUR "BACKSTAGE" REPORTER ANDY MANGELS.
CAT FIGHT AT THE WARNER CORRAL



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COVER BY SCOTT McCLOUD

issue #200 STAFF april, 1992

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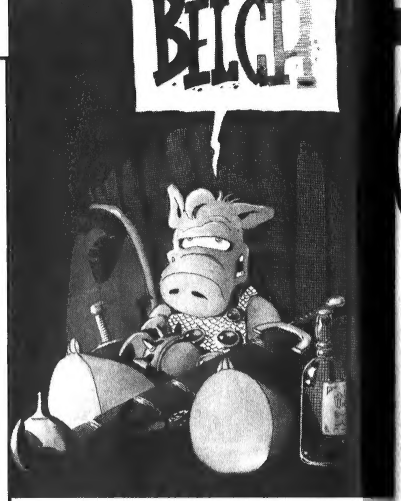


"*Cerebus* has very little to do with what the reviewers say about it."

"Marvel and DC are running out of time because they don't have the best people anymore."

"It's interesting, the reactions people have to Cerebus 'dying alone, unmourned, and unloved.' Everyone dies alone."

CEREBUS
DAVE SIM
AMAZING HEROES #201

THE AMAZING
Cynicalman
LOOKS AT COMICS
©Matt 92
HEY, LOOK! A COMICS SHOP!
BRUM
JOE'S COMIC SHOP
I SHOULD CHECK OUT THE NEW BOOKS
ERT
TING A LING
I HAVEN'T BEEN HERE IN MONTHS.
WOW! LOOK AT ALL THE COMICS!
NO READING!
SALE!
THESE MARVEL AND DC COMICS SURE ARE GRIM LOOKING.
SO, WHAT ELSE IS NEW?
I HAVEN'T BOUGHT A MARVEL COMIC SINCE POWER PACK WENT STUPID. I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN ANY OF THEM ANY MORE.
LIKE, WHAT'S THIS? GHOST RIDER!? WHERE'S MIKE PLOOG? AND WHAT'S THIS FRUITY MOTORCYCLE? I DON'T GET IT.
I WONDER WHO THE "HOT" ARTIST IS THIS YEAR? PROBABLY ANOTHER McFARLANE CLONE.
OR BYRNE CLONE. SAME DIFFERENCE.
IT'S ALL NEAL ADAMS ANYWAY.
AND HE SWIPED FROM STAN DRAKE..
...WHO'S DRAWING BLONDIE NOW!
OH, LOOK! ONE OF THOSE DUMB GIMMICK COVERS!
"LIMITED EDITION." YEAH. RIGHT.
COMICS ARE JUST BEING SOLD LIKE BASEBALL CARDS THESE DAYS! DOESN'T ANYBODY READ THEM ANY MORE?
THERE'S GOT TO BE SOME INDEPENDENTS IN HERE SOMEWHERE.
EXIT
THERE'S SOME!
ADULTS ONLY!
HEY! THE NEW YUMMY FUR! WHEN DID THAT COME OUT?
WHAT!? WHEN DID COLIN UPTON START DOING A REGULAR-SIZE BIG THING?
BIG THING
HE'LL PROBABLY GET SUED BY MARVEL FOR USING THE WORD "THING." HAH!
JULIE DOUCET'S ALREADY UP TO NUMBER THREE OF DIRTY PLOTTE!?
DIRTY PLOTTE
I SHOULD GO TO THE COMIC SHOP MORE REGULARLY!
RING 'EM UP!
PLOP!
THAT COMES TO $107.23
BOING!
I GUESS I'LL JUST TAKE THIS ONE.
OOH!! AND DO YOU WANT IT WRAPPED?
PERHAPS DELIVERED TO YOUR COUNTRY VILLA?
SMART ALEC.
SALE
0
END.

THE DARK

ISSUE TWO

X-FACTOR ARTIST **LARRY STROMAN**

JOINS CONTINÜM COMICS WITH

RICK BRYANT AND TOM VINCENT

QUARTERLY FROM

CONTINÜM COMICS

NEWSLINE

MARSHAL LAW COMES TO DARK HORSE IN *SUPER BABYLON* SPECIAL

Kevin O'Neill and Pat Mills will bring back *Marshal Law*, the ultimate super-hero parody, in the 48-page *Super Babylon*.

"The American super-hero genre is somewhat soft and sweet. We're shaking that up a bit," said Mills, whose writing was reportedly influenced by movie parodies such as *Airplane* and *Naked Gun 2½*.

Artist Kevin O'Neill may be the only artist ever to be banned by the Comics Code Authority. "I was working on a *Green Lantern Corps* story for DC," reported O'Neill. "The art was submitted to the CCA for approval, and was rejected. I offered to make adjustments, but apparently it wasn't any specific artwork they objected to—it was the style of my work that was unacceptable!"

Marshal Law has parodied various aspects of the American super-hero genre in comics for Marvel and Apocalypse. *Super Babylon* takes on the heroes of the Golden Age. Will Marshal Law and his dead girlfriend find happiness at last, or will she prefer the Black Scarab, who's brought the Golden Age Heroes back to life? The $4.95 book is for mature readers.

Marshal Law first appeared in a six-issue Marvel/Epic series in 1987. The character proved to be popular, and returned in *Marshal Law Takes Manhattan*, a parody of the Marvel universe, and two specials for Apocalypse.

Living in a world overpopulated by twisted, out of work super-heroes, Marshal Law is a "Hero Hunter," punishing, and if necessary killing, the superhumans who step out of line.

Mills and O'Neill's "Hero Hunter" will return to give super-heroes a ribbing.

Other News

The number of Dark Horse movie adaptations continues to grow. The *Terminator/Robocop* crossover written by Frank Miller and illustrated by Walt Simonson will be followed by a variety of Robocop items.

A two-part adaptation of *Aliens III* will start in June. There will also be *Armies of Darkness: Evil Dead 3* written by *Evil Dead* creator Sam Raimi with fully painted art by John Bolton. Doug Moench and Paul Gulacy, the team behind *Prey* in *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight*, will produce a new James Bond series. Finally, look out for *The Return of Godzilla* by Randy Stradley and Art Adams.

Matt Wagner's *Grendel* will appear this summer. Dark Horse is also planning a *Nexus* one-shot by Mike Baron and Steve Rude, to be followed by a miniseries. The creator owned *Mask* and *Deadface* will return.

Animal Confidential will be a book full of strange pet stories. It was inspired by the one-pagers in *Dark Horse Presents*.

Harris

Dark Horse will continue to handle the distribution for Harris Publications in 1992. *Vampirella: Adventures in Time and Space* reprints the "Dracula" stories from the famous '70s horror series, with art by Gonzales and a new cover by Dave Stevens. There'll be new material in *Vampirella: Hot Summer Nights*, with a lead story by Steve Englehart, Jackson Guice, and Terry Austin, and a cover by Art Adams. As if that wasn't enough, there will be a monthly *Vampirella* series debuting this fall.

Harris plans to release two titles per month by the end of the year. As part of this plan, there will be two new horror series from Harris. *Twister* by James Hudnall and Estes is a tale of a serial killer who tracks down serial killers. The second title is David Quinn and Hannibal Faust's *Frenzy*. ●

VALIANT'S "UNITY" CROSSOVER SERIES BEGINS WITH FREE *UNITY* #1

Valiant, which has used several ambitious sales gimmicks in the past year, has topped itself with its "Unity" campaign.

Running through all eight of Valiant's regular titles in May and June, it will debut as a 16-page giveaway comic, *Unity* #0 in May. Stores will get twice as many copies of #0 as their lowest order for a Valiant title that month. In other words, if a retailer's lowest order for a Valiant title in May is 10, he or she will get 20 free copies of *Unity* #0.

Shipping in April, *Unity* #0 is by Jim Shooter, Barry Windsor-Smith, and Bob Layton. Frank Miller will provide the covers for at least the first eight issues in the storyline, and possibly for all of them.

According to a press release from Valiant, "The roots of *Unity* run deep. It is founded upon events now unfolding in *Solar, Man of the Atom* and in the origin of Solar; it includes the never-before-revealed origin of Magnus. It is triggered by Harbinger; it profoundly affects Rai, X-O Manowar and Shadowman. Valiant's two new offerings, *Archer and Armstrong* and *Eternal Warrior*, are pivotal to the story." Among the other surprises in "Unity" will be the reintroduction of Turok, Son of Stone into the Valiant universe.

The storyline will be concluded by a giveaway epilogue, *Unity* #1.

Two titles will debut as part of the storyline. *Archer and Armstrong* features the adventures of two buddies: a 10,000 year-old beer-drinking brawler (Armstrong) and a 20-year-old idealist who mysteriously comes back from the dead with super powers (Archer). Jim Shooter is the writer and Barry Windsor-Smith and Ralph Reese are the art team. *Eternal Warrior* is the Armstrong's older brother, an idealist who's been fighting 10,000 years on the side of good.

Getting ready for "Unity." Hey, that looks like it could pinch.

In addition, Valiant will promote the series with posters by Windsor-Smith and Miller.

Steve Masursky of Valiant said, "We're hoping retailers will give one copy of *Unity* #0 to all their regular customers and give the other copies to readers who don't read Valiant but do read super-hero comics.

"We think 'Unity' will get our books out in front of readers who haven't seen our whole line before and help us increase our readership base." ●

CHRONIC RIFT ANNOUNCES AWARD NOMINEES

The Chronic Rift, New York City's talk show on comics, science fiction and fantasy, has announced the nominees in the second annual Roundtable Awards for the best in science fiction, fantasy, and comics.

The Roundtable Awards are unique among fantasy and sci-fi awards in that they regularly allow different genres such as movies, books, and comics to compete in in the same categories. The following categories all had comic book nominees in them:

Best Writer of a Novel, Short Story, or Comic Book

Emma Bull (*Bone Dance*, "Silver & Gold")

C.J. Cherryh (*Heavy Time*)

Neil Gaiman (*Miracleman, the Sandman, Violent Cases*)

William Messner-Loebs (*The Flash, Wardrums*)

Best Artist of a Comic Book

Davis Chelsea (*David Chelsea in Love*)

Kevin Maguire (*The Adventures of Captain America*)

Dave Sim (*Cerebus*)

Walt Simonson (*The Fantastic Four*)

Charles Vess (*The Sandman*)

Best Cover Artist of a Novel or Comic Book

Tom Canty (*Hellblazer, A Whisper of Blood, The Year's Best Fantasy & Horror*)

Kevin Maguire (*The Adventures of Captain America*)

Dave McKean (*Cages, The Sandman, Violent Cases*)

George Perez (*Marvel Tales, Wonder Woman*)

Mark Schultz (*Xenozoic Tales*)

Best Comic Book

Cerebus by Dave Sim & Gerhard

Maus, a Survivor's Tale II: And Here My Troubles Began by Art Spiegelman

The Sandman by Neil Gaiman & various artists

Superman/Action Comics/Adventure Comics/Man of Steel by various writers & artists, edited by Mike Carlin

Yahoo by Joe Sacco

Best Character

Hannibal Lecter (played by Anthony Hopkins in *The Silence of the Lambs*)

Captain Jean-Luc Picard (played by Patrick Stewart on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*)

The Sandman (created by Neil Gaiman, *The Sandman*)

The She-Hulk (created by Stan Lee, *The Avengers, the Sensational She-Hulk*)

Neville Sinclair (played by Timothy Dalton in *Rocketeer*)

Best Thing of 1991

The Addams Family

The Dork (played by Michael Fichera on *The Chronic Rift*)

Eerie, Indiana

Morphing (special effect in *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*

Sandman #18 winning the World Fantasy Award for Best Short Story

Patrick Stewart in *A Christmas Carol*

Sandman received six nominations in all, second only to *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, which received fourteen. No other subject received more than two nominations. The late Gene Roddenberry will receive the Hall of Fame award.

The awards will air on Monday, April 20 on Manhattan Cable Television's Channel 17 (D) at 4:30 p.m.; Thursday, April 23 on MCTV Channel 16 at 2 a.m.; and Friday, May 1 on Paragon's channel 17 at 4:30 p.m.

Other Shows

In May, iconcave comic will be spotlighted on *CR*'s 50th episode. Guests include Catalan Communications publisher Bernd Metz, NBM publisher Terry Nantier, and *Publisher's Weekly* reviewer Calvin Reid. In June, there will be a *Lost in Space* episode, then cartoonist David Chelsea (*David Chelsea in Love*) will be among the guests on the show's season finale, its second interview special. ●

CALIBER ANNOUNCES NEW IMPRINTS: ICONOGRAFIX AND GAUNTLET

Caliber Press has announced that it will be introducing two new imprints in May.

Iconografix will specialize in alternative comics, and Gauntlet Comics will publish the more action-oriented titles. These will join the already existing Tome, which features historical and literary comics. The name "Caliber" will remain as another imprint.

Iconografix

Two already existing Caliber titles, *Tad Martin* and *Lowlife*, will move over to the Iconografix line. *Tad Martin* #3 will feature a cover by popular *Eightball* cartoonist Dan Clowes. Other titles crossing over to the new line included *Planet 29, Go-Man, Mack the Knife* and *Diva's*.

In the new titles: Eric Haven's *Angryman* features "the anxiety and paranoia of a frustrated generation." *Very Vicky* by John Mitchell and Jana Christy covers the adventures of a big city girl who moves to a small town. *Catchpenny Comics* will print stories by various writers, all illustrated by Jason Lutes. Ed Brubaker edits *Monkey Wrench*, an anthology with many as-yet unnamed "top flight creators."

In Chris Jurichic's *Tokyo Days* an American moves to Japan and undergoes an identity crisis. A young woman joins a militant group only to find that it has a hidden agenda in Terence Anthony's *Shadowtown*. Kevin Thomas' *Neverland* is about people confronting their own personal and sexual identities.

Box and *Loose Teeth* creator Brian Sendelbach will be creating a new horror title with Jeff Dickinson. There will also be a collection from *Stick Boy* creator Dennis Worden.

Publisher Gary Leach says the creation of the new imprint "is something that I've thought about for a long time. We always always felt that we were one of the most diverse companies out there, but we've had some complaints from retailers that we were unfocused."

Caliber

Visions is a new title that will be published under the Caliber imprint. It will feature sketchbooks by different artists, and will change its size and price depending on the content of each issue. The first issue features 96 pages of material by popular horror artist Vince Locke. The second issue will feature *Baker Street*'s Guy Davis. Other issues will feature Norm Dwyer, R.G. Taylor, and Chuck Yates. Locke, meanwhile plans to return to do inks and covers for two issues of *Deadworld*.

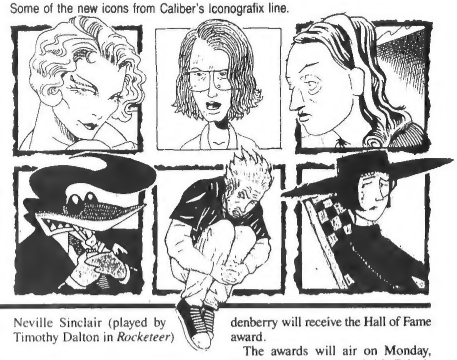
Calibrations, formerly the Caliber information flyer, will expand to become an anthology title. The first issue will feature a new "Deadworld" story from Vince Locke, a prelude to the new *Realm* series by Brent Truax and Patrick Zircher, and the second part of Caliber's "Sinergy" serial, illustated by Guy Davis. The issue will also contain an interview with Bruce Zick, as well as previews of titles such as *Joe Sinn, Markham, Angry Man, Samurai Seven*, and *Tokyo Days*.

"Sinergy" is a serial that will run through many of the Caliber titles in 3 to 6 page installments. Written by Kyle Garret, it will be a modern day *Dante's Inferno*, with a modern traveller witnessing the various tortures at different stages of Hell. The first episode, drawn by Vince Locke, appears in *Zone Continuum* #2 in April.

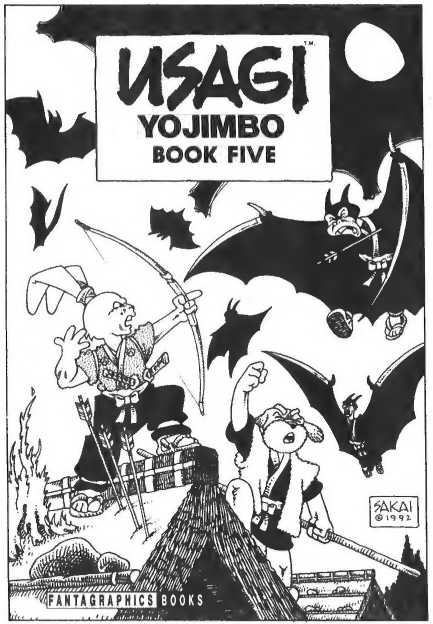
Guy Davis has moved from one pin-up queen, Betty Davis, to another. *A Kiss on the Lips* is his tribute to Marilyn Monroe.

This summer, *Thumbscrew* will be a new horror anthology featuring both "splatter" and traditional, EC-styled horror. The first two issues will sport covers by Vince Locke and Brian Sendelbach, respectively. ●

Some of the new icons from Caliber's Iconografix line.



FROM FANTAGRAPHICS: *USAGI YOJIMBO BOOK FIVE*, COMPLETE POGO



Stan Lee writes the introduction to the hardcover version of *Usagi Yojimbo Book Five*. This signed and numbered hardcover features a bonus, "How I Draw *Usagi*," an expanded version of the comics feature that appeared in *Amazing Heroes*. This feature will not be available in the softcover version, which appears in June.

After considerable delay, Fantagraphics has announced that the first complete chronological reprinting of *Pogo* is ready to begin. Volume one of the *Complete Pogo* will reprint the earliest strips that appeared in the *New York Star* in 1948 and 1949. The book features a special in-depth historical article by R.C. Harvey and biographical material on the strip's creator, Walt Kelly. At $8.95, the softcover book will also be affordable.

Penny Moran Van Horn's The Librarian is a creepy tale of love in which a librarian begins to fall in love with her boss, only to find that he's a slumlord—a slumlord whose tenants practice Voodoo.

The latest *Amazing Heroes Swimsuit Special* will have a cover by Frank Thorne. A list of contributors is not ready yet, but Adam Hughes, Paul Chadwick, Charles Vess, and the usual beach bums rarely miss an issue.

Monster and Eros

Coffin Blood features six tales of horror, with a cover by *Swamp Thing*'s Mike Hoffman. The tales include "Bud and Lou Rot in Hell," featuring a werewolf with a serious grudge against a comedy team. Also, current *Mr. X* artist Ken Holewczynski predicts the return of moviedom's #1 mad genius in *Caligari 2050*, a three-part series.

Eros Forum will print graphic adaptations of readers' "Forum" styled letters. The first issue will sport a cover by Bill Willingham.

Two more Eros graphic novels will be coming out: the surpise hit *Young Witches* by F. Solano Lopez and Barreiro, and *The Complete Drekbook* by the notorious Anton Drek. Both will have new covers by the artists. ●

BATMAN CARTOON SHOW DEBUTS IN FALL; GRAHAM NASH DONATES ART

YOU'RE A GOOD READ, CHARLIE BROWN: Charles Schulz's *Peanuts* recently topped a reader's poll conducted by the Portland Press newspaper in Maine. The poll, which drew a record 3,601 responses, overwhelmingly named *Peanuts* as not only the most widely read, but the "most intently read." It was followed in popularity by *Dennis the Menace*, and in "intensity" by *Calvin & Hobbes*.

In other strip news, Joe and Marcy of Robb Armstrong's *Jump Start* are being featured in the 1992 American Diabetes Alert Campaign.

* * *

HEIL, SNOWY: Herge, the creator of Tintin, is probably the most popular and famous of all European cartonists, but he's being described as a Nazi collaborator in a Paris Court. Herge's widow and publisher are suing Jan Bucquoy, whose satirical newspaper printed a pornographic parody of Tintin, but Bucquoy's lawyer attacked Herge's reputation, saying that during the German occupation, Herge agreed to adjust episodes in his books. A 1942 album featured Mr. Blumenstein, a caricature of a Jewish capitalist. By 1947, he became Mr. Bohlwinkel.

* * *

BY THE TIME I GOT TO WOODSTOCK I HAD 15 MYLAR BAGS: Singer Graham Nash recently donated 112 pages of original comic book art to the Cartoon Art Museum in San Francisco. The gift includes work from *Action Comics, Grendel, Daredevil, Amazing Adventures, Conan, Doom Patrol, Savage Swords, Dr. Strange* and *X-Men/Micronauts*. The museum is planning a special exhibit featuring the most important pieces from the donation.

* * *

CRITTERS VS. BART: Two years after *The Simpsons* became television's most successful cartoon ever, another prime time animated series has debuted. The producers of ABC's *Capitol Critters*, however, have no intention of going for *The Simpsons*' adult audience. Steven Bochco called *Critters* a family show, but said that if he had to pick an audience, "There's no question it would be children." His partner Nay Maudlin even hopes the show won't be compared to *The Simpsons*, which he calls an "animated comedy."

"You could throw out the animation, cast these characters with real actors and not change anything fundamental about [*The Simpsons*]. *Critters* is a cartoon show," said Maudlin.

* * *

NORTHSTAR IN *THE NEW YORK TIMES*: The media coverage of Northstar, the *Alpha Flight* hero who came out of the closet, has reached as far as *The New York Times*' editorial page. The *Times* editorial praised *Alpha Flight* and DC's *Flash* for introducing gay characters and themes into comics. "The comic audience is made up mostly of teen-agers, a group that will benefit most from discussions about sexuality and disease prevention. And the new story lines suggest that gay Americans are gradually being accepted in mainstream popular culture." It added, "The comics have often explored new terrain, conferring hero status on groups that society in general had stereotyped in peripheral roles," listing the Black Panther, the blind Daredevil, and the feminist Wonder Woman as examples.

* * *

JOINING US IN THE BOOTH . . . : Sportscaster Frank Gifford has joined Marvel's board of directors. Interestingly, the wives of both Gifford and Marvel owner Ron Perelman appear regularly on *Live with Regis & Kathy Lee*. Hopefully, they won't call in Jimmy the Greek to do odds. "Ya see, *The Fantastic Four* have built up an excellent record against Doctor Doom, 39-zip, but Doom's a Latverian, and Latverians are genetically inclined to strive for world domination . . . ."

* * *

BATMAN STUFF *RETURNS*: There will of course be a lot of Batman merchandise hitting the stores soon. T-shirts will lead the pack, but a report in the Capital City's *Internal Correspondence* for February, 1992, says that the new T-shirts will be darker and more stylized in the manner of the movie. A high quality Batman statue designed by Dick Giordano will be available for something less than the cost of a new house. Kenner toys will be offering two different toy figure assortments, one with Batman and Robin and the other with Batman, Penguin and the Catwoman.

* * *

FOXBAT: Fox television will finally begin airing its *Batman* cartoon show this fall. The look for the show has been described as "Dark Deco" and "Fleisher-esque" in the February *Diamond Dialogue*. Bruce Wayne will be a philanthropist whose Wayne Foundation builds halfway houses and free medical clinics. Robin will be college student Dick Grayson, though he will be dressed in the costume of Robin III. The three main villains of the series will be the Joker, Penguin, and the Catwoman. Other villains will include the Riddler, Two-Face, Poison Ivy, Mr. Freeze, the Mad Hatter, Scarecrow, Clayface, Dr. Hugo Strange, Killer Croc, Man-Bat, and the Ventriloquist. ●

A *Jump Start* on health.

Tintin in the act of just following orders.

IN MAY: FANTASY-ADVENTURE *ROADWAYS*, SPIDEY'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Archie: Well, Archie Comics have succeeded in updating their comics in one way; first issues, anniversaries, etc., are now treated as major events. *Betty & Me* #200 wraps up that long-running series with "A crescendo of comedy—chockful of romance and jealousy!" The cover is even a plug of what will presumably be Betty's new series. Oh, in case you're wondering, the "Me" in the title refers to Archie.

Archie & Friends #1 kicks off a quarterly series in which Archie and his pals go on a treasure hunt which takes them on a tour of America's national parks, with a gang of villains on their trail. George Gladir and Stan Goldberg are the creative team.

Roadways.

Comic Zone: *Roadways* is a three-issue series about a timid physics professor who finds himself thrust into another world when an animated fence post talks him into leaping into a doorway that appears in the crack of a withered oak tree. He enters a world which is centered around an interdimensional road. The road sucks up all the energy in the biosphere, forcing the world's inhabitants to live on its banks. Writer Jeff Lang says this fantasy adventure was inspired by a poem from *The Hobbit* ("Now far ahead the road has gone/And I must follow if I can") and the Talking Heads' *Road to Nowhere*. Illustrating the series are Ted Slampyak (*Jazz Age Chronicles*) and Joe Kubert school graduate Steve

Lieber.

Dark Tower: A down-on-their-luck Detroit super-hero team is the star of *Freedom Union*, a bimonthly series debuting in May. Each issue will contain gaming information for use with the *Guardians* game.

Two other titles have been announced by the publisher. *The Samaritan* is a woman who wears a magic ring that confers the knowledge of everyone who ever wore it to the current wearer. In *Mantiger*, a half-human, half-animal hero is released from prison after 17 years and seeks to regain his honor.

DC: Some movie called *Batman Returns* will be released in June, and DC will be releasing some items to tie in with it. There will of course be a movie adaptation, and one-shots starring Catwoman and the Penguin, the film's villains. (Oh, you knew that?) There will also probably be a slipcase of DC's most popular Batman books, including *The Killing Joke* and *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*.

DC/Mayfair: Mayfair will do a special version of *Who's Who* which can be used both by Gamers and regular DC readers. The Mayfair version will feature gaming stats on each character, as well as a listing of *all* of a character's appearances to date. Appearing in August, it will be in the *Who's Who* binder format.

Disney: Disney will be repackaging Dark Horse's *Young Indiana Jones* for the newsstand market. There is also a plan to reprint some of the classic Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck newspaper strips.

The little Mermaid's crustacean pal *Sebastian* will get his own two-part series. The first issue features tales by Peter (*X-Factor*) David and Doug (*The 'Nam*) Murray.

Graphitti: Among the limited edition books Graphitti is planning for in '92 are volumes 8 through 10 of *Complete Moebius*, volumes 3 & 4 of the *Hellraiser Collection*, and six volumes of the *Akira* collection, which will have the same contents as the manga versions.

Innovation: The *Lost in Space* annual has been rescheduled for March, and will contain several extra bonuses, including pin-ups by Bob Burden, Kelley Jones, Steve Leialoha, Jerome Moore, and George Perez, and some previously unpublished cast photos with captions by series star Bill Mumy.

Kitchen Sink: Volume four of KS's color *Flash Gordon* features Flash's climactic battle with Ming the Merciless. This collection, available in hardcover and softcover, reprints the original Alex Raymond strips as they appeared in newspapers in 1939 and 1940. Kitchen Sink plans to do further series featuring Austin Briggs and Mac Raboy's version of the strip.

Following the recent conclusion of Will Eisner's *Spirit* reprint series is a new Spirit comic that will reprint the character's very first adventures. *Spirit #1: The Origin Years* contains the first appearance of the title's main cast: Denny Colt (The Spirit), Commissioner Dolan, Ellen Dolan, and Ebony White. KS says this new series will run about 25 issues.

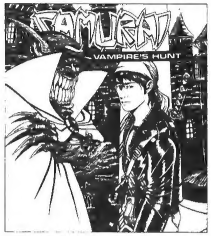
Malibu: Some of the titles announced for the Image imprint include *Brigade* by Rob Liefeld, *Spawn* by Todd McFarlane, *Dragon* by Erik Larsen, and *Exiles* by Paul Pelletier.

The second *Tarzan* series will be illustrated by Tom Yeates. New titles coming from Malibu include Charles Marshall and Mitch Byrd's *Strange Sports Stories* and *The New Ex-Mutants* by Paul Pelletier. There will be a color *Cat's Claw* collection from Platinum Editions.

Marvel: This summer, Marvel will celebrate the 30th anniversary of Spider-Man in each of its Spidey titles. The comics will have different 4" by 5" holograms affixed to special card stock covers. There will apparently be a shocking revelation in the 30th anniversary issue of *Amazing Spider-Man*.

Mirage: Stan Sakai's *Space Usagi*, a futuristic version of his popular *Usagi Yojimbo*, will be a mini-series from Mirage sometime this spring. A preview of the series will appear in *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles #47*. Space Usagi will also be in Fantagraphics' *Usagi Yojimbo* color special.

The *Gahan Wilson Limited Edition Monster Baseball Trading Card Set* features ten ghoulish baseball stars from the mind of the popular macabre cartoonist.



Night Wynd is not sure he can trust that used car salesman.

Night Wynd Enterprises: Hotachi Kimura takes up his *Samurai* sword once again to battle the vampires that stalk New York in *Samurai: Vampire's Hunt*, a four-issue series by Barry Blair.

NOW: Now has announced its intentions to release 20 limited series in 1992, as well as a 3-D comic every month.

There will also be some special promotions. *Twilight Zone #9* will have a funhouse cover with a hologram door and a 3-D interior. *Green Hornet #12*, which marks the third anniversary of NOW's publishing the title, will have a Green Hornet logo button polybagged with it.

Speed Racer will return in a mini-series later this year, and NOW promises a more mature Speed. I guess this means he'll be fastening his seat belt and such.

There'll also be a *Mr. Lizard* one-shot later in the year, and an adaptaion of the *Universal Soldier* movie starring Dolph Lundgren and Jean-Claude Van Damme.

A *Flash* in Kitchen Sink's plans.

Personality: Published under the Celebrity imprint: The *Beatles Vs. the Rolling Stones* special will compare the two most famous bands of the British invasion. *Guns and Roses #1* is a profile of the notorious heavy metal band. *Sexy Women #1* includes paintings of Traci Lords, Cindy Crawford, and Madonna. For some reason, I don't even feel like telling you what the two-issue *Bo Jackson Vs. Michael Jordan* series is about. All of these titles will be in full color.

Personality: The three-issue *Football Heroes* starts off with Joe Namath. *Pink Floyd* gets a three-issue series.

Friendly & Humor: *The Paddler* is an X-rated parody of the Punisher by Barry Blair. *Madonna: Sex Goddess* is a four-issue adult spoof of Madonna. Barry Blair and Dave Cooper bring *Gun Fury* out of retirement.

Sky Comics: Sky Comics, known best for its Comic Book Pages (blue lined boards appropriate for doing comic book art on), will soon be releasing *Sky Comics Presents Monthly*. The first three issues of this anthology will feature four ongoing stories: "Where the Heck Am I" features the time-travelling heroes known as the Drifters; "I am Vengeance" stars a justice-seeking heroine possessed by the vengeful appiritions known as the Seeker; "Of Men and Immortality' is about a scholar's search for immortality in the 1800s; and "Race Danger" is about a rebellious race car driver forced to deal with espionage and ninjas.

Sky is also planning several full color comics featuring the characters appearing in *SCPM*.

Tundra: More European graphic novels will be coming from Tundra. The quarterly *Wind of the Gods* series of color hardcovers form a samurai epic by Adamov, an artist famed for his attention to detailed art and storytelling.

The "Kurtzmanesque" *Desperados* is a two-volume humorous western featuring three renegade women. It's by Cromwell and J. Ruffner.

Fulu will be a black & white softcover series about a mysterious slave woman's adventures in the south. It will run four or five volumes.

Of the color hardcover *Neekibo*, Tundra says, "What if Tintin were grown up and had a love affair with an African tribeswoman." Its sequel will be titled *Grisnoir*. ●

COMICS BESTSELLERS—FEBRUARY

All figures from the February, 1992 Capital City *Internal Correspondence* newsletter. Figures represent direct market retail orders. Numbers in parentheses ( ) represent a title's overall position on the charts.

TOP TEN COMICS (TOTAL $$$)

(The comics with the highest orders in terms of $$$ spent)

1.	Youngblood #1	Malibu
2.	X-Men #7	Marvel
3.	Spider-Man #21	Marvel
4.	Uncanny X-Men #287	Marvel
5.	X-Force #9	Marvel
6.	Cage #1	Marvel
7.	Punisher War Zone #2	Marvel
8.	Punisher: G-Force	Marvel
9.	Wolverine #50	Marvel
10.	Warlock & The Infinity Watch #3	Marvel

TOP TEN COMICS (CIRCULATION)

(The comics with the most issues ordered)

1.	X-Men #7	Marvel
2.	Uncanny X-Men #287	Marvel
3.	X-Force #9	Marvel
4.	Cage #1	Marvel
5.	Spider-Man #21	Marvel
6.	Youngblood #1	Malibu
7.	Punisher War Zone #2	Marvel
8.	Wolverine #53	Marvel
9.	X-Factor #77	Marvel
10.	Amazing Spider-Man #361	Marvel

TOP TEN INDEPENDENT COMICS (CIRC.)

1 (6).	Youngblood #1	Malibu
2 (22).	Aliens: Hive #1	Dark Horse
3 (29).	Aliens: Genocide #4	Dark Horse
4 (33).	Predator: Bloody Sands #2	Dark Horse
5 (39).	Star Wars: Dark Empire #2	Dark Horse
6 (44).	Terminator: Enemy Within #4	Dark Horse
7 (56).	Next Men #0	Dark Horse
8 (66).	Young Indiana Jones #1	Dark Horse
9 (81).	Magnus Robot Fighter #12	Voyager
10 (82).	Shadowman #1	Voyager

TOP TEN BLACK & WHITE COMICS (CIRC.)

1 (106).	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles #44	Mirage
2 (110).	Dark Horse Presents #59	Dark Horse
3 (126).	Savage Sword of Conan #196	Marvel
4 (145).	Cerebus #155	Aardvark-Vanaheim
5 (156).	Omaha #17	Kitchen Sink
6 (158).	Conan Saga #61	Marvel
7 (161).	Ironwood #10	Fantagraphics
8 (167).	Xxxenophile #6	Palliard
9 (171).	Venus Wars #11	Dark Horse
10 (174).	Mad Dogs #1	Eclipse

TOP PUBLISHERS/MARKET SHARES

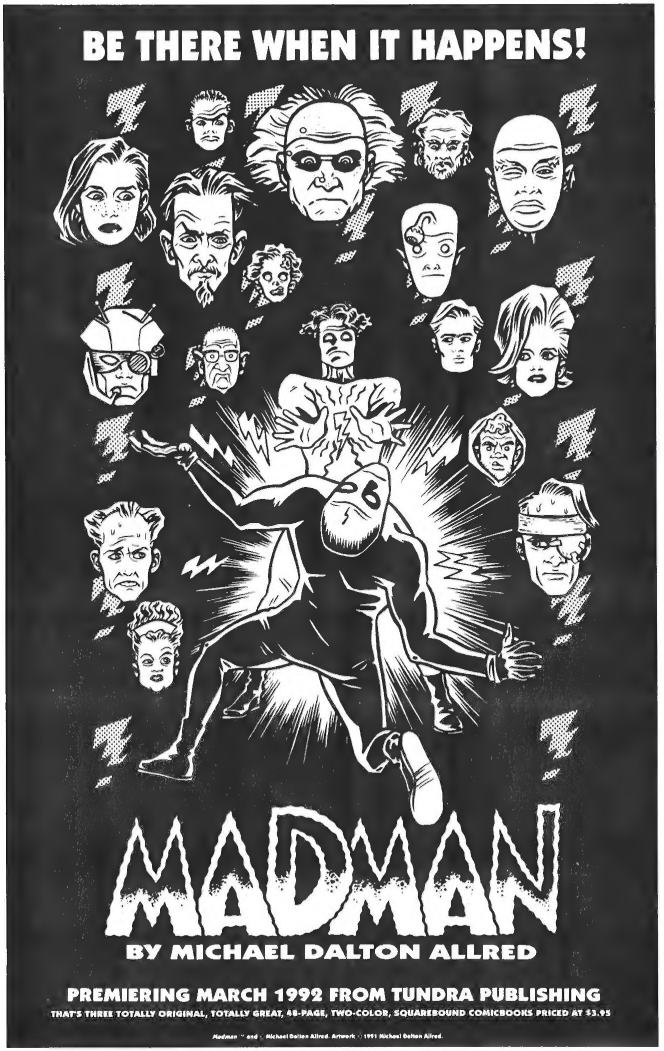
1.	Marvel	46.76%
2.	DC	17.58%
3.	Dark Horse	7.39%
4.	Malibu	3.64%
5.	Voyager	2.07%
6.	Innovation	1.12%
7.	Fantagraphics	0.90%
8.	Personality	0.75%
9.	Comico	0.68%
10.	Viz	0.65%

TOP BOOKS ($$$)

1 (17).	Justice League Archives #1	DC
2 (27).	Spider-Man: Fear Itself	Marvel
3 (83).	Guardians of the Galaxy	Marvel

Malibu's *Youngblood* is the company's most successful book ever, grabbing the #1 dollar spot, a feat even Dark Horse hasn't been able to manage. It's also the most successful creator owned comic of all time, and a good omen for Malibu's Image imprint, which will feature titles by ex-Marvel superstars.

DC's market share was even lower than in August, when *X-Men #1* came out. Its highest ranking titles were *Justice League Archives* (#17 on the dollar chart) and *Batman: Gotham Knights* (#16 on the circulation chart).


BE THERE WHEN IT HAPPENS!
MADMAN
BY MICHAEL DALTON ALLRED
PREMIERING MARCH 1992 FROM TUNDRA PUBLISHING
THAT'S THREE TOTALLY ORIGINAL, TOTALLY GREAT, 48-PAGE, TWO-COLOR, SQUAREBOUND COMICBOOKS PRICED AT $3.95
Madman ™ and © Michael Dalton Allred. Artwork © 1991 Michael Dalton Allred.

COMING DISTRACTIONS!

AAAAHH!

☐ **MS. PMS #0.**

AARDVARK—VANAHEIM

☐ **CEREBUS #157.**

☐ **CEREBUS CHURCH & STATE #30.** The final issue of the bi-weekly reprint series. Reprints *Cerebus* #80. By **Dave Sim and Gerhard.** [*B&W comic; $2.00*]

AC COMICS

☐ **FEMFORCE #48.**

☐ **FEMFORCE UP CLOSE: NIGHTVEIL #1.** This new title is designed to focus on the personal life of Femforce. Like all those showers they have to take. By **Heike and Roberts.** [*Color comic; $2.75*]

☐ **WALL OF FLESH AND OTHER HORRORS #1.** An anthology title. By **Joe Kubert, Dick Ayers, & various.** [*B&W comic; $2.95*]

ACME COMICS

☐ **HERU, SON OF AUSAR #3.**

ALPHA PRODUCTIONS

☐ **ALPHA ILLUSTATED #2.**

☐ **TOTEM: SIGN OF THE WARDOG SPECIAL EDITION.** I'm sorry, I can't think of a single witty thing to say about this one. By **French, Pelletier & Cram.** [*B&W comic; $2.50*]

ANOTHER RAINBOW

☐ **LITTLE LULU LIBRARY SET 1.** The final three-volume set. Includes Little Lulu comics from *Four Color* #74 to *Little Lulu* #5. [*B&W hardcover; $120.00; 702 pages*]

ANTARCTIC PRESS

☐ **HITOMI AND HER GIRL COMMANDOES #1.** A four-issue mini-series spinning off from *Ninja High School*. By **Dave Wilson.** [*B&W comic; $2.50*]

☐ **KIMBER #1.** All new stories adapted from the original manga series from *Boy Sunday Manga Weekly*. By **Chris Troutt and Gregory Lane.** [*B&W comic; $2.50*]

ARCHIE

☐ **ARCHIE #401.**

☐ **ARCHIE ANDREWS, WHERE ARE YOU? DIGEST #81.**

☐ **BETTY & ME #199.**

☐ **BETTY & VERONICA #53.**

☐ **BETTY & VERONICA DIGEST #56.**

☐ **BETTY & VERONICA DOUBLE DIGEST #32.**

☐ **JUGHEAD #35.**

☐ **JUGHEAD DIGEST #76.**

☐ **JUGHEAD DOUBLE DIGEST #12.**

☐ **TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES #34.** "The Search for the Charlie Llama". By **Dean Clarrain and Chris Allan.** [*Color comic; $1.25*]

☐ **TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES SPECIAL #1.** Presenting two stories: "If a Tree Should Fall . . ." Loggers and environmentalists and Bigfoot, oh my! And "The Last Sea Serpent," a broad *Moby Dick* homage. By **Sullivan, Thomas, and Wray.** [*Color comic; $2.50*]

☐ **WORLD OF ARCHIE #1.** A new quarterly series. This issue, Archie imagines himself on Christopher Columbus' first voyage to America. "Uh, yes, sir, I guess they'll make *excellent* slaves. By **George Gladir and Henry Scarpelli.** [*Color comic; $1.25*]

☐ **ZEN INTERGALACTIC NINJA #3 (of 3).** Last issue (for now). By **Stern, Andru & Esposito.** [*Color comic; $1.25*]

Girl fight in *Femforce!*

BLUE KNIGHT

☐ **KEEPERS #1.**

BRAVE NEW WORDS

☐ **OZ SQUAD SPECIAL EDITION #1.** Fixing the mistakes on the first issue. What ever happened to doing it right the first time? By **Ahlquist, Murphy, and Parks.** [*B&W comic; $2.50*]

☐ **RAGGEDY MAN #1.** A chilly—oops! I meant chilling—cyber-noir adventure with a cover by Bryan (*Sandman*) Talbot. By **Lowe and Hicks.** [*B&W comic; $2.50*]

BUDGIE PRESS

☐ **ADVENTURES OF VITAL-MAN #6.**

CALIBER PRESS

☐ **CALIBRATIONS #1.** An anthology/information series covering the titles from Caliber Press. By **Various.** [*B&W comic; $2.95*]

☐ **DEADWORLD #24.**

☐ **HEATSEEKER #1.** Like the movie *Alien*, but with robots. By **Mann, Byrd, Story & Fiortmonte**. [*B&W comic; $2.50*]

☐ **ICONOGRAFIX SPECIAL.** A special issue which showcases some of the titles that will be published under Iconografix, a new imprint of Caliber. (Like they need another one.) By **Various**. [*B&W comic; $2.50*]

☐ **ZONE CONTINUUM #2 (of 3).**

CALIBER/TOME PRESS

☐ **DANTE'S INFERNO #2.**

☐ **NO-MAN'S LAND.** A French soldier's view of WWI trench warfare. By **Garrett and Yates**. [*B&W comic; $3.50; 48 pages*]

☐ **NOSFERATU LIMITED EDITION SET.** Limited edition signed and numbered plate with the first two issues. By **Holewczynski & Nieves**. [*B&W comic; $5.95*]

☐ **PRISONER OF CHILLON.** Lord Byron's classic poem of the last years of Francois Bonivard. By **Byron and Taylor**. [*B&W comic; $2.95*]

☐ **SAMSON.** The life of Samson in glorious black and white. By **French & Torres**. [*B&W comic; $2.95*]

☐ **THE COMPANIONS OF ULYSSES.** A collection of some of the fables of La Fontaine. By **La Fontaine & Gustave Dore**. [*B&W comic; $2.95*]

☐ **ZULUNATION #3 (of 3).**

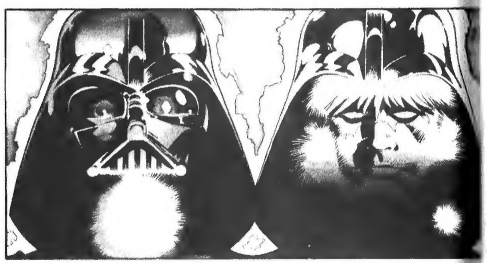
CAT'S PAWS COMICS

☐ **MORGANA X #3.**

☐ **SUNWING #2.**

COMICO

☐ **ELEMENTALS #28.**



Star Wars: Dark Empire.

☐ **FATHOM #2 (of 3).**

☐ **KINGDOM OF THE DWARVES #2.**

☐ **STRIKE FORCE AMERICA #2.**

COMIC CREATIONS

☐ **ASTONISHING TITAN #1.**

CONQUEST PRESS

☐ **LORELEI OF THE RED MIST #2.**

CONTINUITY

☐ **MEGALITH #11.**

☐ **MS. MYSTIC #8.**

☐ **REVENGERS SPECIAL: HYBRIDS #1.** By **N. Adams, Stone, Stroman, Akin and Garvey**. [*Color comic; $4.95; 48 pages*]

DARK HORSE COMICS

☐ **ALIENS: HIVE #3 (of 4).**

☐ **CHEVAL NOIR #29.**

☐ **CREEPY #2.**

☐ **CROMWELL STONE #1.** Cromwell Stone is one of ten men who survived a mysterious sea voyage. Now his fellow survivors are disappearing in unusual and unnerving ways, and when he tries to figure out what is going on, he gets caught up in a much stranger story. By **Andreas**. [*B&W comic; $3.50; 48 pages*]

☐ **DARK HORSE PRESENTS #61.**

☐ **DARK HORSE PRESENTS: ALIENS #1.** A collection of all the Aliens stories presented in *Dark Horse Presents*, including stories by **Mark Verheiden, Simon Bisley,** and more. All in color for the first time. By **Various**. [*B&W comic; $4.95; 48 pages*]

☐ **THE EYEBALL KID #1 (of 3).** This series reprints all the Eyeball Kid stories from Harrier's *Deadface*. Featuring a new collage painting by Campbell. By **Eddie Campbell & Ed Hillyer**. [*B&W comic; $2.25*]

☐ **NEXT MEN #3.**

☐ **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEADLINE USA #1.** More comics by brilliant Brits like **Richard Sala**. By **Various**. [*B&W comic; $2.95; 48 pages*]

☐ **RESIDENTS: FREAK SHOW.** In what's got to be one of the strangest crossovers in comic book history, some of the most innovative artists adapt the songs off of the Residents album *Freak Show*. Delight to such oddities as:"Herman the Human Mole" by **Richard Sala**; "Wanda the Worm Woman" by **John Bolton**; "Jello Jack" by **Matt Howarth**; "Mickey the Mumbling Midget" by **Savage Pencil**; "Bouncing Benny the Bump" by **Pore No Graphics**; "Lillie" by **Dave McKean**; and "Tex the Barker" by **Kyle Baker**. Cover by Charles Burns. [*B&W and Color comic; $9.95; 80 pages*]

☐ **STAR WARS: DARK EMPIRE #3.** Long, Long Ago, in a galaxy far, far away, I had many Kenner *Star Wars* action figures with which to play. If I still had them, I could act out *Dark Empire* today. By **T. Veitch & C. Kennedy**. [*Color comic; $2.95*]

☐ **TALES OF ORDINARY MADNESS #4 (of 4).**

☐ **TERMINATOR: HUNTERS & KILLERS #2 (of 3).**

☐ **VAMPIRELLA #4.**

☐ **VENUS WARS #13.**

☐ **YOUNG INDIANA JONES CHRONICLES #3.**

DARK TOWER ENTERPRISES

☐ **VAMPIRE LOVER #1.**

DC

☐ **ACTION COMICS #676.** [*ships 4/3*]

☐ **ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #491.** "They Called it Metallo Yello, dum de dum." By **Ordway, Grummett and Hazlewood**. [*Color comic; $1.00; ships 4/30*]

☐ **ANIMAL MAN #48.** Buddy and the Animal Masters face off against The Antagon. (God help me, it sounds like a toyline.) By **T. Veitch, and Dillion.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/30*]

☐ **AQUAMAN #7.** Aquaman confronts nightmarish versions of himself and his friends while battling for his life in a hospital. By **McLaughlin, Hooper, and Dvorak.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/23*]

☐ **ARMAGEDDON: INFERNO #3.** Featuring the Justice Society of America. By **Ostrander, McDonnell, and A.Adams.** [*Color comic; $1.00; ships 4/30*]

☐ **THE BLACK CONDOR #1.** In a purely copyright-protecting fashion, DC dredges up another Freedom Fighter. "Yeah, I got a great concept. It's this guy, he flies, but, see, this is the important part, he doesn't want to. Great, huh?" Coming soon: Son of the Human Bomb and Doliman, Jr. By **Augustyn, & R.A. Morales.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/30*]

☐ **BATMAN #478.** "A Gotham Tale." Part 2 of a 2-part bi-weekly story. By **Wagner and Kennedy**. [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/3*]

☐ **BATMAN #479.** "Pagan". By **A. Grant & Mandrake.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/23*]

☐ **BATMAN: GOTHAM KNIGHTS #4 (of 4).** [*ships 4/16*]

☐ **BLACK HOOD #7.** [*ships 4/16*]

☐ **THE COMET #11.** Featuring one of the 18-card set of !mpact trading cards. By **Yale, Dennis, & Panosian.** [*Color comic; $1.00; ships 4/3*]

☐ **THE COMET ANNUAL #1.** "Earthquest" and another trading card set. By **Puckett, Von Eeden, and Mitchell.** [*Color comic; $2.50; ships 4/16*]

☐ **COOL WORLD #2 (of 4).**

☐ **THE CRUSADERS #1.** The Fly, Jaguar, Fireball, the Comet, and the Web. They are—**The Crusaders**. Their mission: track the Shield! Featuring 3 more of the 18-card !mpact trading card set. By **Augustyn & Wald** and **R.A. Morales & Hanna**. [*Color comic; $1.00; ships 4/3*]

☐ **DEATHSTROKE, THE TERMINATOR #11.** "Guns and Roses" 2 of 2. By **Woltman, Nichols & Perez**. [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/16*]

☐ **THE DEMON #24.** "Return of the Howler" part 2. Guest-starring Batman and Robin the boy Noogie. By **Grant, Semeiks, and B. Smith.** [*Color comic; $1.50; ships 4/23*]

☐ **DETECTIVE COMICS #644.** "Electric City" Part 1 of 2. By **Dixon, Lyle, and Hanna.** [*Color comic; $1.00; ships 4/3*]

☐ **DOCTOR FATE #40.** Guest-starring Wonder Woman. By **Messner-Loebs & Gross.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/3*]

☐ **DOOM PATROL #55.** Cliff Steele must stop Crazy Jane from killing her abusive father and Dorothy Spinner must stop the Candlemaker from destroying the world. By **Morrison, Case & Woch**. [*Color comic; $1.50; ships 4/3*]

☐ **FLASH #64** "Born to Run" part 3 of 4. By **Wald, LaRocque, and Marzan Jr.** [*Color comic; $1.00; ships 4/16*]

☐ **FLASH #65.** "Born to Run" part 4 of 4. By **Wald, LaRocque, and Marzan, Jr.** [*Color comic; $1.00; ships 4/30*]

☐ **THE FLY #10.** [*ships 4/3*]

☐ **THE FLY ANNUAL #1.** "Earthquest" part 5 of 6. Also a trading card. By **Strazewski, Parobeck, & Fricke.** [*Color comic; $2.50; 64 pages; ships 4/23*]

☐ **THE GREATEST FLASH STORIES EVER TOLD.** Including adventures from all three Flashes from the Golden Age to the present. By **Various.** [*Color trade paperback; $14.95; 288 pages; ships 4/23*]

☐ **GREEN ARROW #61.** By **Grell, Springer, and Marcos.** [*Color comic; $1.50; ships 4/3*]

☐ **GREEN ARROW #62.** By **Grell, Springer, and Marcos.** [*Color comic; $1.50; ships 4/23*]

☐ **GREEN LANTERN #25.** Redneck Gardner's gonna get his ass kicked. Jordan Style. By **G. Jones, Bright, Hamilton, Staton, Yap, & Tanghal**. (Boy, how many people does it take to make one comic book?) [*Color comic; $1.75; 48 pages; ships 4/30*]

☐ **GREEN LANTERN: THE ROAD BACK.** A trade paperback collecting the new *Green Lantern* #1-8. By **G. Jones, Broderick, and Patterson**. [*Color trade paperback; $8.95; ships 4/16*]

☐ **GREEN LANTERN: MOSAIC #1.** The patchwork world of Oa is given its own monthly series starring its landlord, John Stewart. DC is supposedly giving away free "glow in the dark" power rings. This offer good for 24 hours. By **G. Jones, Hamner, and Panosian.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/16*]

☐ **GREEN LANTERN CORPS QUARTERLY #1.** In the tradition of *Justice League Quarterly* comes the new quarterly format for the Green Lantern Corps. By **Various.** [*Color comic; $2.50; 64 pages; ships 4/23*]

☐ **HAWKWORLD #24.** "Escape from Thanagar" Part 4 of 5. By **Ostrander and Nolan.** [*Color comic; $1.50; ships 4/16*]

☐ **HELLBLAZER #54.** "Royal Blood" Part 3 of 4. By **Ennis and Simpson.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/23*]

☐ **IMPACT COMICS WHO'S WHO #3.** Featuring three more of the 18-card !mpact trading card set. By **Waid & Various**. [*Color comic; $4.95; 48 pages; ships 4/3*]

☐ **JAGUAR #10.** [*ships 4/23*]

☐ **JAGUAR ANNUAL #1.** No! Not another exclusive trading card ahhhhhh! [*We are sorry to report that the typesetter has just been killed by over-gimmicking.*] By **Messner-Loebs, Kollins, and Pepoy.** [*Color comic; $2.50; ships 4/30*]

☐ **JUSTICE LEAGUE AMERICA #63.** The unveiling of the new JLA headquarters. Free buffet! By **Jurgens, and Burchett**. [*Color comic; $1.00; ships 4/16*]

☐ **JUSTICE LEAGUE EUROPE #39.** [*ships 4/30*]

☐ **JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY #7.** Blue Beetle's blind date. A must see. [*Color comic; $3.50; 80 pages; ships 4/16*]

☐ **THE LEGEND OF THE SHIELD #12.** Joe reclaims his armor and goes after the man who orchestrated his troubles and ruined his life—his father. Can you say,

Oooooh, baby! Art by Bolland.

"Oedipus?" By **Miehm and Wald.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/30*]

☐ **THE LEGEND OF THE SHIELD ANNUAL #1**. With a Neal Adams cover and yet another card in the 18-card Impact trading card set. By **Biaustein, Birch, and Lowe.** [*Color comic; $2.50; ships 4/3*]

☐ **L.E.G.I.O.N '92 #40**. Penciller Barry Kitson debuts as regular scripter. By **Kitson and R. Smith.** [*Color comic; $1.50; ships 4/30*]

☐ **LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #30**. The "Terra Mosaic" continues. DC would like to note that *Legion* has been changed from Deluxe to New Format. What does this mean? Well, it means you pay the same price for less quality. By **Giffen, T&M Bierbaum, Pearson, and Story.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/23*]

☐ **LOBO'S BACK #2**. Lobo is reincarnated as a woman. I hope she doesn't have PMS. By **Giffen, Grant, and Bisley.** [*Color comic; $1.50; ships 4/30*]

☐ **THE MANY DEATHS OF THE BATMAN**. A trade paperback of the **John Byrne** story. Art by **Aparo & DeCarlo.** [*Color comic; $3.95; 80 pages; ships 4/3*]

☐ **MY NAME IS CHAOS #4 (of 4)**. [*ships 4/3*]

☐ **NEW TITANS #87**. Pantha changes diapers! What will those wacky guys think of next? By **Wolfman, Grunnett, Statema, and Vey.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/23*]

☐ **QUESTION QUARTERLY #5**. It's really a shame that such a good book like this should be plagued by extreme delays, not to mention being cancelled. By **O'Neil, Quesada, and Various.** [*Color comic; $2.95; ships 4/16*]

☐ **THE RAY #5 (of 6)**. By **Harris, Quesada, and Nichols.** [*Color comic; $1.00; ships 4/30*]

☐ **SANDMAN #38**. Neil once again starts his short stories. Begining with a folk tale of ancient Russia, gypsies, monsters, tsarinas and more. By **Gaiman, Eagleson, and Locke.** [*Color comic; $1.50; ships 4/23*]

☐ **SHADO, SONG OF THE DRAGON #4 (of 4)**. By **Grell, Davis-Lawrence, & Morrow.** [*Color comic; $4.95; 48 pages; ships 4/30*]

☐ **SHADE, THE CHANGING MAN #24**. "The Road" Part 4 of 5. By **Milligan and McCarthy**. [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/16*]

☐ **STAR TREK #32**. "Veritas" part 3 of 4. By **Weinstein, Purcell & Starr.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/16*]

☐ **STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION #32**. Starring the most asked-about non-regular, Sonya Gomez. By **Friedman, Krause, and Marcos.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/30*]

☐ **SUICIDE SQUAD #65**. DC has announced plans to cancel the Squad, and in the Squad, cancel means **KILL!** Write in now and save the Squad. I am. [*ships 4/3*]

☐ **SUPERMAN #68**. "Terminated" ties in with *Deathstroke* #12 and 13. By **Jurgens and Breeding.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/23*]

☐ **SUPERMAN: THE MAN OF STEEL #12**. [*ships 4/16*]

☐ **SWAMP THING #120**. A classic tale of poverty, abuse, death in the 19th century. By **Collins, Eaton, and DeMulder.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/30*]

☐ **WARLORD #5 (of 6)**. [*ships 4/3*]

☐ **THE WEB #9**. [*ships 4/16*]

☐ **WONDER WOMAN #63**. "Operation: Cheetah" Part 2. Guest-starring Deathstroke, the Terminator. Famed cover artist Brian Bolland debuts with this issue. By **Messner-Loebs & J. Thompson, and Tanghal.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/16*]

PIRANHA PRESS

☐ **BEAUTIFUL STORIES FOR UGLY CHILDREN #28**. "The Guilty Orphan" By **Louapre and Sweetman.** [*B&W comic; $2.50; ships 4/30*]

DEADLINE

☐ **DEADLINE #41**. Featuring "Tank Girl" and "Johnny Nemo." By **Various.** [*B&W magazine; $4.50*]

DISNEY

☐ **DISNEY ADVENTURES DIGEST VOLUME II #8**.

☐ **DISNEY COLOSSAL COMICS COLLECTION#4**. [*Color comic; $1.95*]

☐ **DONALD DUCK ADVENTURES #26**. "Race to the South Seas." [*Color comic; $1.50*]

Miracleman #23.

☐ **UNCLE SCROOGE #268**. Piece 6 of the Duckburg Map.

☐ **WALT DISNEY'S COMICS & STORIES #573**. Piece 5 of the Duckburg Map.

DOUBLE DIAMOND

☐ **HEPCATS #2-4**. Second Printing. By **Martin Wagner.** [*B&W comics; $2.00 each*]

ECLIPSE

☐ **JAMES BOND: PERMISSION TO DIE**. Talk about too little, too late. James must rescue the niece of a scientist from behind the now non-existent Iron Curtain. By **Mike Grell.** [*Color softcover: $14.95; hardcover: $32.95*]

☐ **MAD DOGS #3 (of 3)**.

☐ **MAGIC FLUTE COLLECTION**. A collection of some of the world's greatest operas. Dance all night! By **P. Craig Russell.** [*Color softcover: $14.95; color hardcover: $32.95*]

☐ **METAPHYSIQUE #1 (of 2)**. Come visit moral ambiguity, human frailty, and cosmic consciousness hosted by Metaphysique. By **Norm Breyfogle.** [*Color comic; $2.50*]

☐ **MIRACLEMAN #23**. Beginning this issue: *Miracleman Book Five: The Silver Age*, which picks up 25 years after "Carnival" (last issue) and revolves around the problems of Dicky Dauntless, Young Miracleman, and the growing pains of the Miraclebabies' adolescence. With covers by Barry Windsor-Smith. By **Gaiman and Buckingham**. [*Color comic; $2.50*]

☐ **MIRACLEMAN BOOK 4 COLLECTION**. Hardcover.

☐ **REVELATIONS**. Hardcover.

☐ **SON OF CELLULOID**. Hardcover.

FANTACO

☐ **SHRIEK SPECIAL: THE BRIDGE #1**. A demented presence from the depths of time wants to destroy the bridge connecting Heaven and Hell. Great. That means we're going to have to take the detour on Route 666 through Limbo and Purgatory. By **Jim Whiting**. [*B&W comic; $3.50*]

☐ **ZOMBIE WAR #1 (of 2)**. Imagine a world war in which you must fight every soldier who has ever died. Live *Zombie War*. By **Eastman, Skulan, and Talbot.** [*B&W comic; $3.50*]

FANTAGRAPHICS

☐ **THE ARCANE EYE OF HOGARTH**. By **Burne Hogarth.** A collection of work from the man who founded the New York School of Visual Arts and refined the run-on sentence. [*$19.95 softcover; $34.95 hardcover; $39.95 signed & numbered hardcover*]

☐ **BRADLEYS**. The complete collection of Bradley strips including the never before reprinted "Buddy the Weasel" and "The Trickle-Down Theory." By **Peter Bagge.** [*Color softcover; $14.95*]

☐ **CEREAL KILLINGS #2**. The *Watchmen* done with Cap'n Crunch and the Trix Rabbit. Personally, I'd cast Sonny as the Comedian. By **James Strum**. [*B&W comic; $2.25*]

☐ **DOOFER: PATHWAY TO McEARTH #1**. A collection of work by **Paul Ollswang** including "Memoirs of Doofer" from the old *Graphic Story Monthly*. [*B&W comic; $2.00*]

☐ **HATE #4**. Second Printing. By **Peter Bagge.** [*B&W comic; $2.00*]

☐ **JIZZ #9**. In August of 1991, the White House received a letter threatening the life of President Bush. The return address showed the sender as Scott Russo of Brooklyn, N.Y., who subsequently received a visit from the Secret Service to find out why he wanted to kill Mr. Bush, what with Quayle and all. This issue is a true account of their investigation of the author. By **Scott Russo**. [*B&W comic; $2.50*]

☐ **LOUT RAMPAGE SIGNED EDITION** By **Dan Clowes** [*Softcover; $13.95*]

☐ **LOVE AND ROCKETS #30**. Second printing.

☐ **NAUGHTY BITS #5**. Another story starring Bitchy Bitch. By **Roberta Gregory**. [*B&W comic; $2.00*]

☐ **REAL STUFF #7**. By **Eichhorn, Barr, & Upton**. [*B&W comic; $2.25*]

EROS COMIX

☐ **BARBARIENNE #1 (of 4)**. By **Lock & Naring**. [*B&W comic; $2.50; 24 pages*]

☐ **THE COMPLETE BIRDLAND**. The three-issue series by **Gilbert Hernandez**, with new pages. [*B&W softcover; $9.95; 80 pages*]

☐ **KARATE GIRL #1**.

☐ **LIZ AND BETH VOLUME 3 #1**. By **G. Levis.** [*B&W comic; $2.50; 24 pages*]

☐ **MODERN ROMANS #2 (of 3)**.

☐ **RETURN TO VOODOO ISLAND #1 (of 2)**.

☐ **SCUZ ABOUT TOWN #1**

☐ **TALK DIRTY #3**.

MONSTER COMICS

☐ **THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI #1 (of 3)**. The adaptation of Robert Weine's 1919 film. By **Ian Carney and Mike Hoffman**. [*B&W comic; $2.25*]

☐ **FREAKS #1 (of 4)**. Another adaptation of a classic horror movie. This time it's Tod Browning's 1932 film *Freaks*. Pulled almost immediately by MGM, it has been seen only sporadically and in heavily cut versions, giving it a cult status of incredible popularity. First Issue cover by Sam Kieth. By **Jim Woodring and F. Solano Lopez**. [*B&W comic; $2.50*]

☐ **RAZORGUTS #4 (of 4)**

☐ **SHE BUCCANEER #2 (of 2)**.

FATHOM PRESS

☐ **ICE INC. SPECIAL #1**. This issue recaps and continues the storyline from *Manga Monthly* #1-3. By **Owens and Tyler**. [*B&W comic; $2.95*]

FELIX COMICS

☐ **CAMPFIRE STORIES #2**.

☐ **LITTLE PEOPLE**. Visit the land of the Winkeyes, where everyone has a two-Tonka Truck garage. By **Oriolo & Leigh**. [*B&W comic; $3.50*]

☐ **NEW ADVENTURES OF FELIX THE CAT #2**.

FISH TALES, INC.

☐ **SUPER SHARK HUMANOIDS #1**. "Genetically mutated from the forced experiments of a crazed marine biologist who was held prisoner by aliens beneath the ocean on the ancient ruins of Atlantis." Ooookay. By **Peters, Peters & Leighton**. [*Color comic; $2.75*]

FLEETWAY

☐ **2000 AD #781-784**. Featuring Judge Dredd. By **various**. [*Color comics; $2.95 each*]

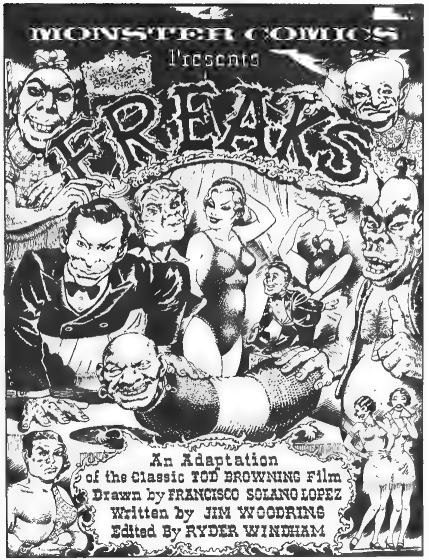
FLEETWAY/QUALITY

☐ **CYBERCRUSH: ROBOTS IN REVOLT #8**

☐ **DARE THE IMPOSSIBLE #5**

☐ **DREDD RULES! #7**.

☐ **JUDGE DREDD CLASSICS #66**.



The classic horror film becomes a classic horror comic.

☐ **JUDGE DREDD PERP PACK #2**. By **Various**. [*Color set; $12.00*]

☐ **NECROPOLIS #4 (of 12)**.

☐ **ROGUE TROOPER #4**.

☐ **666: THE MARK OF THE BEAST #2**.

☐ **2000 A.D. SHOWCASE #1**. The return of Tanner, Cab Driver/Bodyguard. Tanner must be hooked into a dream fantasy to find a killer. By **Brosnan & Hopgood**. [*Color comic; $2.95*]

FORBIDDEN FRUIT

☐ **THE ADVENTURES OF MISTY #10**.

☐ **CASE MORGAN, GUMSHOE PRIVATE EYE #10**.

☐ **MIRANDA THE TEASE #2**.

☐ **STARLOVE #1**.

FRIENDLY/PERSONALITY

CELEBRITY COMICS

☐ **MADONNA VS. MARYLIN #1**. Peroxide wars, take one. By **Upton, Bair, and Palmiotti**. [*Color comic; $2.95*]

☐ **NOLAN RYAN #1**. The life story of the famous pitcher. By **Tartaglione and Upton**. [*Color comic; $2.95*]

☐ **STAR TREK EPISODE GUIDE #2**

FRIENDLY

☐ **BAMBI THE HUNTER #4.**

☐ **LEATHER & LACE IN OUTER SPACE #1 (of 3).**

☐ **SEX TREK #1**

☐ **VAMPYRE'S KISS: THE FIRST EVIL #4 (of 4).**

PERSONALITY COMICS

☐ **BASEBALL SLUGGERS #4 (of 4): Don Mattingly.** *[B&W comic; $2.95]*

☐ **BEATLES SPECIAL LIMITED BOX SET.** Give me a break. *[B&W set; $25.00]*

☐ **KISS #1 (of 4).** The forerunners of Glamor Rock. *[B&W comic; $2.95]*

☐ **LED ZEPPELIN #3 (of 4): John Bonham.**

☐ **NEW CREW #7: Marina Sirtis.**

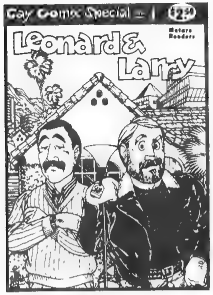
☐ **ORIGINAL CREW #7: Majel Barret.** This is the one you've been waiting for.

☐ **PERSONALITY COMICS SPECIAL LIMITED BOX SET.** Signed by the Publisher. Is this vain or what?. *[B&W set; $25.00]*

☐ **SLAM DUNK KINGS #2 (of 4): David Robinson**

GAY COMICS

☐ **GAY COMICS SPECIAL #1.** "Leonard and Larry." Just two gay men trying to live in today's society. Good stuff. By **Tim Barella**. *[B&W comic; $2.50]*



GAY COMICS #14. Now a quarterly anthology edited by **Andy Mangels**. This time around it features "Ride the Wild Surf," "Peace of Mind," "Grizzly and Ted," "Mid-Dyke Crisis," and "Future Shock" by **Roberta Gregory**. *[B&W comic; $2.50]*

GLADSTONE/DISNEY

☐ **WALT DISNEY'S COMICS & STORIES IN COLOR: Volume 4.**

GRAPHITTI DESIGNS

☐ **AKIRA VOLUME #2.** A hardcover limited to only 1500 copies of the original manga. By **Katsuhiro Otomo.** *[Hardcover; $39.95]*

GREENTREE

☐ **COMICS: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY.** *[Hardcover; $24.95]*

☐ **SPACE ACES! COMIC BOOK HEROES FORM THE FORTIES AND FIFTIES.** *[Softcover; $14.95]*

☐ **SPACE ACES! POSTCARD COLLECTION.** *[Softcover; $7.95]*

☐ **SUPER DUPER SUPERMEN: COMIC BOOK HEROES FROM THE FORTIES AND FIFTIES!** *[Softcover; $14.95]*

☐ **SUPER DUPER SUPERMEN POSTCARD BOOK.** *[Softcover; $7.95]*

HARVEY COMICS

☐ **BABY HUEY #4.**

☐ **CASPER BIG BOOK #1.** A 52-page collection features Casper, Wendy, The Ghostly Trio, and Spooky. By **Various.** *[Color comic; $1.95]*

☐ **FELIX BIG BOOK #1.** By **Otto Messmer.** *[Color comic; $1.95; 52 pages]*

☐ **HOT STUFF DIGEST #1.** A pocket-sized comic published on a quarterly basis *[Color digest; $1.75]*

☐ **HOT STUFF SIZZLERS #1.** *[Color comic; $1.25]*

☐ **LITTLE AUDREY #1.** A new quarterly series. *[Color comic; $1.25]*

☐ **MUPPET BABIES BIG BOOK #1.** By **Stan Kaye & Marie Severin.** *[Color comic; $1.25]*

☐ **RICHIE RICH CASH MONEY #2**

☐ **RICHIE RICH MONEY WORLD DIGEST #4.**

☐ **SAVED BY THE BELL #2.**

TOM & JERRY BIG BOOK #4.

☐ **WENDY DIGEST #6.**

HERO GRAPHICS

☐ **CAPTAIN THUNDER & BLUE BOLT #2 (of 3).** By **Roy Thomas and E.R. Cruz.** *[Color comic; $2.95]*

☐ **CHAMPIONS CLASSICS #5.**

☐ **FLARE ADVENTURES #5.**

☐ **ICICLE #3.**

IANUS PUBLICATIONS

☐ **CYBERSUIT ARKADYNE #2 (of 6).**

IMAGINE THIS

☐ **SUPERIOR SEVEN #2.**

INNOVATION

☐ **FORBIDDEN PLANET #2 (of 4).** "The innocence of Altaira." The adaptation of this classic film continues. Surely, someone will die if the source of the mysterious forces is not discovered. And stop calling me Shirley. By **Campiti and Gross** *[Color comic; $2.50]*

☐ **HERO ALLIANCE QUARTERLY #4.** *[Color comic; $2.75]*

☐ **LAWNMOWER MAN #1.** This is the official adaptation of the upcoming Stephen King film. *Lawnmower Man* is a story about The Shop funding a covert government experiment to advance humanity. By **Light, Immonen, Mayger, & Pensa.** *[Color comic; $6.95; 84 pages]*

☐ **LOST IN SPACE #9.**

☐ **SHADOW OF THE TORTURER #3.** "The Challenge." Severain is put on trial for the crime of *Mercy*. By **Rockwell and Naifeh.** *[Color comic; $2.50]*

JADEMAN

☐ **BLOOD SWORD #46.**

☐ **BLOOD SWORD DYNASTY #33.**

☐ **DRUNKEN FIST #46.**

☐ **FORCE OF BUDDHA'S PALM #46**

☐ **IRON MARSHAL #23.**

☐ **ORIENTAL HEROES #46.**

JOHN BROWN

☐ **VIZ #53.**

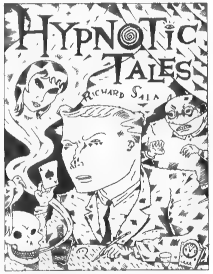
KITCHEN SINK PRESS

☐ **BASEBALL COMICS #2.**

☐ **ERNIE COMICS #1.** The best of the daily strip, picked by the author himself. By **Bud Grace.** *[B&W comic; $2.95]*

☐ **GRATEFUL DEAD COMIX #5.**

☐ **HYPNOTIC TALES.** Richard Sala's best work taken from the pages of *RAW, BLAB, Snarf, Taboo* and *Drawn & Quarterly*. By **Richard Sala.** *[Softcover: $8.95; limited edition signed hardcover: $29.95]*



☐ **STEVEN #5.**

☐ **XENOZOIC TALES #12.** The ecological comic is back in an upgraded format, and with the blessing of General Motors (ironic, eh?), *Cadillacs & Dinosaurs* becomes the new subtitle for the book By **Mark Schultz.** *[B&W comic; $2.95]*

LEADSLINGER COMICS

☐ **BLACK BAT #3.**

☐ **BLACK BAT #4.**

☐ **UNCLE SCAM #1.** Uncle Scam is the Head of the Department of Disinformation and the ultimate bureaucrat. This issue, he takes on the mightiest of investigative reporters, Ronaldo Ramble. By **R. Murtaugh.** *[B&W comic; $2.50]*

LETHARGIC COMICS

☐ **LETHARGIC COMICS WEAKLY #11.** This month's cover spoof—*The Rocketeer.* *[B&W comic; $2.50]*

MADHEART PRESS

☐ **SHADOWTOWN #1.**

MALIBU GRAPHICS

ADVENTURE

☐ **LOVECRAFT #4 (of 4).**

☐ **PARANOIA #5 (of 6).** Based on the role-playing game.

☐ **PLANET OF THE APES #23.** "The Terror Beneath," part 3 of 4. By **Marshall, Wyman, and Murphy.** *[B&W comic; $2.50]*

☐ **RE-ANIMATOR: DAWN OF THE RE-ANIMATOR #2 (of 4).** By **Spangler & Malaga.** *[B&W comic; $2.95]*

☐ **ROCKET RANGER #5 (of 6).**

☐ **ROGER WILCO #2.**

☐ **RUST #1.** Finally back in the hands of his creator, Rust returns. Cover by Dave Dorman. By **Miller, Hester and Parks.** *[Color comic; $2.95]*

☐ **TORG #3 (of 4).** Based on the West End Games role-playing game.

AIRCEL

☐ **DEBBIE DOES COMIX #3.**

☐ **DEBBIE DOES DALLAS #13.**

☐ **FLESH GORDON #2 (of 4).**

ETERNITY

☐ **DEMONIC TOYS #4 (of 4).**

☐ **EVIL ERNIE #5 (of 5).**

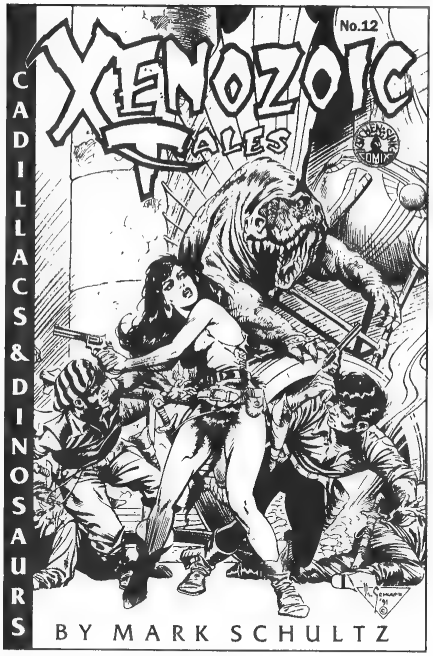
☐ **ROBOTECH II: THE SENTINELS BOOK II #13.**

SOUTHERN SQUADRON: THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT #4.

MALIBU

☐ **TARZAN THE WARRIOR #2 (of 5).** By **Wheatley, Vokes & Hempe.** *[Color comic; $2.50]*

☐ **YOUNGBLOOD #3 (of 3).** Warning: This cover of *Youngblood* has a gimmick (or two).



Mark Schultz's *Xenozoic Tales* returns in April.

MARVEL

☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT #109.** "World Tour" Part 3 of 4. By **Lobdell and Morgan.** *[Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/14]*

☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT SPECIAL.** A look into Alpha Flight's past. Wolverine leads the team in its first mission against Egghead and his Emmissaries of Evil, but one of the team doesn't come back. Could it be Wolverine? Oh, sure. By **Lobdell, Broderick, and Patterson.** *[Color comic; $2.50, ships 4/28]*

☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #265.** Gosh, a metallic ink reprint of the first appearance of Silver Sable. Make me puke. By **DeFalco and Frenz.** *[Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/14]*

☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #363.** "Carnage" Part 3 of 3. By **Michelinie, Bagley, and Emberlin.** *[Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/14]*

☐ **AVENGERS #348.** *[ships 4/21]*

☐ **AVENGERS WEST COAST #83.** By **R. Thomas and Herb Trimpe.** *[Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/7]*

☐ **BARBIE #18.** *[ships 4/14]*

☐ **BARBIE FASHION #18.** *[ships 4/28]*

☐ **BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT COMIC BOOK #7.** *[ships 4/14]*

☐ **CAGE #3.** Guest-starring the Punisher and introducing the new Power-Man. By **McLaurin, Turner, and Ivy.** *[Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/7]*

☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #401.** "Operation Galactic Storm" Aftermath. By **Gruenwald, Levins and Bulanadi.** *[Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/7]*

☐ **CAPTAIN PLANET #9 (of 12).** *[ships 4/28]*

☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #257.** *[ships 4/21]*

☐ **CONAN SAGA #63.** *[ships 4/28]*

☐ **CONAN & THE RAVAGERS OF TIME Graphic Novel.** Guest-starring Red Sonja and King Kull. By **Thomas, Docherty, and Alcala.** *[Color softcover; $9.95; ships 4/7]*

☐ **COPS: THE JOB #1 (of 4).** Co-written by ex-cop Joe Jusko. The story is based on the dangers and crises that an average

NYPD officer faces every day. By **Hama, Jusko, Harris and Palmiotti.** [*Color comic, $1.25; ships 4/7*]

☐ **DAREDEVIL #305**. Guest-starring Spider-Man. By **Chichester, Weeks, and Williamson.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/7*]

☐ **DARKHAWK #16**. "Heart of the Hawk" Epilogue. [*ships 4/7*]

☐ **DEATH'S HEAD II #4 (of 4)**. The grand finale guest-starring an assortment of Future Heroes including Wolverine, Punisher, Spider-Man, Daredevil, and the Avengers. By **Abnett, Sharp, & Lanning.** [*ships 4/21*]

☐ **DEATHLOK #12**. "Biohazard Agenda" part 1 of 4. Guest-starring Nick Fury and new secrets about Deathlok's origin. [*ships 4/28*]

☐ **DEFENDERS OF DYNATRON CITY #5 (of 6)**. [*ships 4/28*]

☐ **DOCTOR STRANGE #42**. The first *Infinity War* crossover. Oh boy! Galactus needs a toady and Doc is elected. By **Thomas & Isherwood.** [*ships 4/28*]

☐ **DR. STRANGE ANNUAL #2**. "Return of the Defenders" Part 4 of 4. By **Thomas, Hoover, Lopez, & Wyman.** [*Color comic; $2.25; ships 4/21*]

☐ **DOCTOR WHO MAGAZINE #184**.

☐ **EXCALIBUR #51**. By **Alan Davis, Braithwaite, & Rubinstein**. [*Color comic; $1.75, ships 4/28*]

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #365**. Guest-starring Alpha Flight By **DeFalco, Ryan, Buscmadi.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/28*]

☐ **GHOST RIDER #26**. Guest-starring the X-Men. Ghost Rider travels to New Orleans to see if Blaze can save Danny. By **Mackie, Wagner & Witherby.** [*Color comic; $2.75; 52 pages; ships 4/14*]

☐ **G.I. JOE #125**. [*ships 4/21*]

☐ **GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #25**. Ooooh! It's a Milestone 48-page, prismatic foil-stamped cover. Guest-starring Firestar. By **Valentino & Montano.** [*Color comic; $2.50; ships 4/14*]

☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #394**. By **David, Wildman, & Farmer.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/21*]

☐ **INFINITY WAR #1**. In a crossover attempt to to repay Ron Perelman's junk-bond debts, an unknown Evil Mastermind (Who could it be? Hmmmm. I don't know, could it be. . .Magnus?!) plots to destroy the galaxy. By **Starlin, Lim, and Milgrom.** [*Color comic; $2.50; ships 4/28*]

☐ **IRON MAN #281**. "Operation Galactic Storm" Aftermath. By **Kaminski & ?** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/28*]

☐ **JAMES BOND, JR. #5**. [*Ships 4/28*]

☐ **KID 'N PLAY #5**. [*Ships 4/28*]

☐ **MARVEL AGE #113**. [*ships 4/21*]

☐ **MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #104, 105**. By **Mackie & Fry.** [*Color comics; $1.50 each; ship 4/14, 4/21*]

☐ **MARVEL TALES #262**. [*ships 4/21*]

☐ **MARVEL UNIVERSE MASTER EDITION #19**. [*ships 4/28*]

☐ **MOON KNIGHT #39**. Presenting the totally new revamped Moon Knight. (So what does this make? The fifth, sixth revamp?) [*ships 4/28*]

☐ **MOON KNIGHT BOOKSHELF: DIVIDED WE FALL**. Moon Knight vs. his friends as they attempt to assassinate the world's leaders. (This is worth $4.95?) By **Jones, Cowan, and Palmer.** [*Color softcover; $4.95; ships 4/14*]

☐ **MOTORMOUTH #1**. The latest release from Marvel UK. Motormouth, a.k.a. Harley Davis, travels across time and space with an experimental teleport device. "Hey, Harley, is it the Shoes. Got to be the Shoes!" By **Marks, Frank, and Lanning.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/28*]

☐ **THE 'NAM #69**. "Punisher First Invades the 'Nam." Why don't you just change the name of the book to *Punisher's 'Nam*? By **Dixon, Kobasic, and Palmiotti.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/28*]

☐ **NAMOR THE SUB-MARINER #27**. [*ships 4/7*]

☐ **NAMOR ANNUAL #2**. "Return of the Defenders" Part 2 of 4. By **Marz & Fry.** [*Color comic; $2.25; ships 4/7*]

☐ **NEW WARRIORS #24**. "Nothing But the Truth" 3 of 4. Firestar testifies against Vance during his trial while Thrash betrays the team. By **Nicieza, Bagley, and Mahlstedt.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/28*]

☐ **NFL SUPERPRO #9**. [*ships 4/7*]

☐ **NOMAD #2**. By **Nicieza, Hawbaker, & McKenna**. [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/7*]

☐ **THE PIRATES OF DARK WATER #8 (of 9)**. [*ships 4/28*]

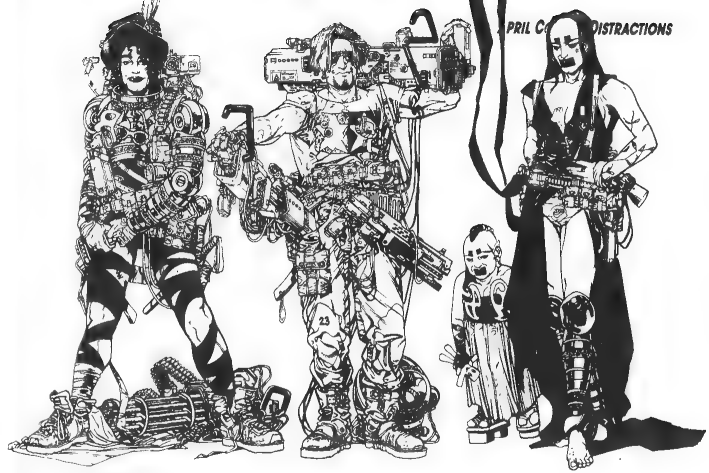
☐ **PUNISHER #64**. "Eurohit" Part 1 of 7. First issue of the *Punisher* bi-weeklies. By **Abnett, Lanning, Braithwaite, and Williamson.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/21*]

☐ **PUNISHER ANNUAL #5**. "System Bytes" Part 1 of 4. By **David and Butler.** [*Color comic; $2 25; ships 4/28*]

☐ **PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #43** [*ships 4/7*]

☐ **PUNISHER WAR ZONE #3**. "Ladder of Death" Part 4 of 6. By **Dixon, JR Jr. & Janson**. [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/14*]

Left: a Michael Golden *Cops* cover. Right: *Motormouth*.



Marvel UK's *Warheads*.

☐ **QUASAR #35**. "Operation Galactic Storm" Aftermath. By **Gruenwald, Capullo, and Candelario.** [*Color comic; $1 25; ships 4/14*]

☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #198** [*ships 4/14*]

☐ **SECRET WARS TPB**. What can I say? Everybody has the series and knows how much it sucks. [*Go blow. I liked it. — TH*] By **Shooter, Zeck and Various.** [*Color softcover; $19.95; ships 4/21*]

☐ **SHE-HULK #40** [*ships 4/7*]

☐ **S.H.I.E.L.D. #36**. "The Cold War of Nick Fury" Part 1 of 4. By **Brown, Sharp, Wyman, and Hudson.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/21*]

☐ **SILVER SABLE #1**. From the pages of *Spider-Man* to the coffers of Ron Perelman, it's *Silver Sable.* By **Wright, Butler, & Panosian**. [*Color comic; $2.00; 32 pages; ships 4/14*]

☐ **SILVER SURFER #66**. [*ship 4/28*]

☐ **SILVER SURFER ANNUAL #5**. "Return of the Defenders" Part 3 of 4. By **Marz, Lim, and Christopher.** [*Color comic; $2.25; ships 4/14*]

☐ **SLEEPWALKER #13**. [*ships 4/14*]

☐ **SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #189**. First of the 30th Anniversary issues. This issue sports a gold embossed cover on cardstock paper in which Spidey and the Green Goblin fight their final battle. By **DeMatteis & Buscema.** [*Color comic; $1 25; ships 4/28*]

☐ **SPIDER-MAN #23**. "Revenge of the Sinister Six," 6 of 6 even though the conclusion is next issue. By **Erik Larsen.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/21*]

☐ **THE THING #3 (of 4)**. [*Color comic; $1 25; ships 4/14*].

☐ **THOR #448**. Guest-starring Spider-Man. By **DeFalco, Frenz, and Milgrom.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/28*]

☐ **TOXIC CRUSADERS #2**. By **Steve Gerber & various**. [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/7*]

☐ **WARHEADS #1**. From Marvel UK. Warheads are a group of dimension traveling mercs, and in their first issue they fight Wolverine. Don't you ever feel a little sorry for Wolverine? "Hey, Wolverine, I got a first issue comin' up. You want to be in it? Aw, c'mon, please, it's a really big issue. Well, how come you were in *Spider-Man* then? Tell you what, if you be in my first issue, I'll appear in your anniversary issue. You don't have to be sarcastic" By **Vince & Erskine.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/28*]

☐ **WARLOCK #2 (of 6)** Reprints the original series by **Jim Starlin.** [*Color comic; $2.50; ships 4/7*]

☐ **WARLOCK AND THE INFINITY WATCH #4**. Omega has captured Pip, Moondragon, Drax, and Gamora. Now he plans to capture to Adam to have all of the Infinity Gems. However, Omega can't count because there are five people and there are six gems. By **Starlin & Medina.** [*Color comic; $1.75; ships 4/21*]

☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #88**. "The Name of the Rose," 6 of 6. Introducing the Blood Rose, who teams up with Spidey to bring down the new Kingpin—Richard Fisk. Could this be what Popeye was referring to when he said, "If anyone dasts to risk my *fisk*"? By **Mackie, Saviuk, and DeLaRosa.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/7*]

☐ **WHAT IF? #36**. "Time Quake" 4 of 5. "What if Thor Became the Thrall of Set?" Odin must die. By **Thomas, Lofficier and Rodgers.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/21*]

☐ **WOLVERINE #54**. Gambit and Wolvie travel to Japan to find Jubilee, and Logan has a long overdue reunion with Mariko. This sounds like a remake of *If It's Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium*. By **Hama, Silvestri, and Green.** [*Color comic; $1.75 ships 4/14*]

☐ **WONDER MAN #10**. "Operation Galactic Storm" aftermath. Wonder Man changed forever! As opposed to his costume, which has been changed about a gazillion times. By **Jones, Johnson, and Harps.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/14*]

☐ **WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING #3**. [*ships 4/7*]

☐ **X-FACTOR #79**. [*ships 4/21*]

☐ **X-FORCE #11** [*Color comic; $1 25; ships 4/28*]

☐ **UNCANNY X-MEN #248** Reprinting Jim Lee's first art on the title. (Milk it while you can, guys.) By **Claremont & Lee.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/7*]

☐ **UNCANNY X-MEN #289**. Bishop joins the team. By **Byrne & Portacio.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/7*]

☐ **X-MEN #9**. Guest-starring Ghost Rider. A journey to the Big Easy and a visit to Gambit's past. By **Byrne, Lee, and Williams.** [*Color comic; $1.25; ships 4/21*]

☐ **X-MEN CLASSIC #72**. By **Claremont, P. Smith & Wiacek** [*ships 4/28*]

EPIC

☐ **AKIRA #37**. The last issue. Followed by two bonus issues full of additional material. [*ships 4/14*]

☐ **BLOODLINES: A TALE FROM THE HEART OF AFRICA. By Goff, Nieves, and Hayden.** [*Color softcover; $2.95; ships 4/14*]

☐ **EPIC #1 (of 4)**. A new anthology using Epic's cast of Characters. "Hellraiser, "Birthright," "Stalkers," "Dreadlands: Prologue," and "Wild Cards" are featured. Plus a cover by Dave McKean. By **Various.** [*Color comic; $4.95; ships 4/21*]

GROO THE WANDERER #90. [ships 4/14]

HELLRAISER #13. [ships 4/7]

IDOL #2 (of 3). [ships 4/21]

NIGHTBREED #16. [ships 4/21]

BIG NORTH'S ALASKA COMICS

BIG RACE #1.

MILLENIUM PUBLISHING

DOC SAVAGE: DOOM DYNASTY #2 (of 2). By Ellis, Weiringo, Lewis & DeLay. [Color comic; $2.50]

MILLER PUBLISHING

JONTAR #5.

TRIAL RUN #7.

MIRAGE

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES #46. The first of a two-part time travel story in which the Turtles must travel back to feudal Japan to save an old ally. But can they best the Adult Mutant Raging Samurai Dinosaur? By Michael Dooney. [B&W comic; $2.00]

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES #32. Reprinted in Color. By Eastman, Talbot and Bode. [Color comic; $2.75]

MISTER PLANET

WITNESS #1. Their mission: preserve the little that's good in the world and reduce the rest to smoldering ash. Look out, Politicians. By Cheff & Caravaggi [B&W comic, $3.00]

MOCKINGBIRD STUDIOS

ACE OF SPADES #1. A story of magic, mystery, and adventure. By Davis and Harrison. [B&W comic, $2.50]

DREAM #2.

DREAM #3.

HEROINES INC. #1. Continuing the old Avatar Comics series. By Kennedy. [B&W comic; $2.50]

THEY CALLED HIM EVIL #1. The story of a psychotic cat and his oblivious owner By Douglas TeaNapel. [B&W comic; $2.25; 24 pages]

THEY CALLED HIM EVIL #2.

MU PRESS

CHAMPION OF KATARA #1 (of 3).

DESERT PEACH #16.

MULEHIDE

I, LUSIPHUR #1.

MYSTERY GRAPHIX

MIDNIGHT SCREAMS #2.

MIDNIGHT SCREAMS LIMITED EDITION #2.

MIDNIGHT SCREAMS #3.

RAZOR LIMITED EDITION #0.

NBM

THE FOREVER WAR Vol. 3.

ROACH KILLER.

NEW ENGLAND COMICS

BATTRON #1. A comic about the life of a man who joined the French Foreign Legion and the became a merc. By Wayne Vansant. [B&W comic; $2.75]

CHROMA-TICK SPECIAL EDITION #2.

MAN-EATING COW #1. Follow Krinkles, a washed up rodeo clown who's been tracking his personal nemesis, The Man-Eating Cow. By Griffith, Hopkins, and Whiting. [B&W comic; $2.75]

PAUL THE SAMURAI #1. It's the cut-throat politics of international competition. By Griffith, Garcia, and Whiting. [B&W comic; $2.75]

ROCKIN' BONES #3. See the review of issue one in our review column. By Darren Merinuk. [B&W comic; $2.75]

NICOTAT

BORIS THE BEAR #35. Boris and the Ghoul track Lopez and his gang of drug pushers. By James Dean Smith [B&W comic; $2.75]

NIGHT WYND ENTERPRISES

BLITZ #2 (of 4). By Barry Blair. [B&W comic; $2.50]

DRAGONFIRE: VOLUME 2 #1 (of 4). The Dragons return to Earth. By Barry Blair. [B&W comic; $2.50]

ELFHEIM: VOLUME II #3 (of 4).[B&W comic; $2.50]

ELFLORE #3 (of 4).

FOXFIRE #3 (of 3).

SERPENTYNE #3 (of 3).

NORTHSTAR

KLOWNSHOCK #4.

TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE #3.

NOW COMICS

FREEJACK #3 (of 3). By Dixon, Stiner, & DeZuniga. [Color comic; $1.95; Collector's Edition $2.50]

FRIGHT NIGHT 3-D SPECIAL #1. Free 3-D Glasses. Yowza. By Caputo, Vokes, and Mowry. [3-D comic; $2.95]

GREEN HORNET #10.

MARRIED: WITH CHILDREN #9.

RALPH SNART ADVENTURES #2 (of 3). By Marc Hansen. [Color comic; $2.50]

REAL GHOSTBUSTERS #8

STING OF THE GREEN HORNET #1 (of 4). It's 1941. Do you know where your Nazis are? By Fortier & Butler. [Color comic; $2.50; Collector's Edition, $2.75]

TALES OF THE GREEN HORNET #6.

TWILIGHT ZONE #8.

PREMASITIUM COMICS

PRIVATE ICE #1.

RAW BOOKS

MAUS LIMITED EDITION. By art spiegelman. [Slipcased hardcover set; $125.00]

REBEL STUDIOS

RAW MEDIA MAGS TWO. By Tim & Joe Vigil & Various. [B&W comic; $5.00; 28 pages]

REVOLUTIONARY COMICS

BASEBALL LEGENDS #4: Mickey Mantle.

BASEBALL SUPERSTARS #6: Jose Canseco.

CONTEMPORARY BIO-GRAPHICS #4: Pee Wee Herman.

HARD ROCK COMICS #4: Nirvana.

ROCK N' ROLL COMICS #47: Queen.

PSYCHOMAN #1. A direct quote of the contents. "This is the most powerful being on Earth! The reluctant super-hero takes up the idea of relevance where Spider-Man left off. A 17-year-old boy gifted with superpowers, he has no costume [Oh no, not another porno title] and no secret identity, and he has to deal with everyday problems like sex, drugs, parents, and money. He listens to Metallica." Maybe you guys should stick to ripping off celebrities. By Loren & Crompton. [B&W comic; $2.50]

SPORTS SUPERSTARS #3: "Magic" Johnson.

RIP OFF PRESS

ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN NEMO #1 (of 3). This story takes place years before 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. By Vance & Davis. [B&W comic; $2.50]

APRIL HORRORS #1. The lighter side of the Dark Side. By Wheeler, Jones, Hoffman, and Reddington. [B&W comic; $2.95]

FREAK BROTHERS #3.

THOSE ANNOYING POST BROTHERS #25.

ROCKET COMICS

TIME CITY #3.

RUSS COCHRAN

HAUNT OF FEAR #6

TALES FROM THE CRYPT #8.

VAULT OF HORROR #6.

SIDESHOW

CYNTHERITA #1.

SLAVE LABOR

HARRY THE COP #1. Whiney, "all-cops-are-racist-stormtroopers" diatribe. By McDonald & Cash. [B&W comic; $2.95]

JAVA TOWN #1. A collection of stories from Suburban High Life and other places. By Scott Saavedra. [B&W comic; $2.95]

STUDIO INSIDIO

FROM BEYONDE #4.

SUPERSTAR COMICS

THE HELMET ZONE #1. A special edition developed for Project Head First to promote helmet safety. By Libman & Sullivan. [Color comic; $1.50]

TEMPO STUDIO

UNIPSI #1.

3-D ZONE

3-D TRUE CRIME #1. Jack Cole crime stories that led Fredrick Wertham to write Seduction of the Innocent. By Gilbert, Cole, and Zone. [3-D comic; $3.95]

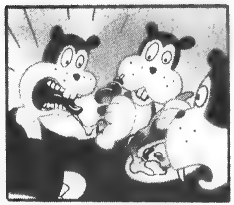
TITAN BOOKS

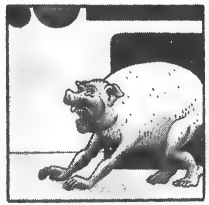
JUDGE DREDD IN MONKEY BUSINESS.

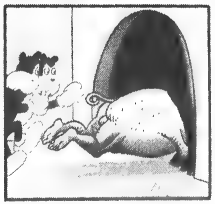
JUDGE DREDD VS. MIDNIGHT SURFER.

ROGUE TROOPER: FUTURE WARS.

TUNDRA







Jim Woodring's *Frank in the River* from Tundra.

FRANK IN THE RIVER #1. Frank is an innocent little creature whose curiosity lands him hip deep in mystery, demons, minimum wage, and the villainous Manhog. By Jim Woodring. [Color comic; $2.95]

THE JAM #4.

MADMAN #2 (of 3). By Michael Dalton Allred. [Two color comic; $3.95]

UNDERGROUND COMICS

OMEGA KNIGHTS #4.

UNITED FANTASY NETWORKS

PALADIN #2.

VALIANT/VOYAGER

ARCHER & ARMSTRONG #0. Armstrong, a ten thousand-year-old reprobate with the strength of a battalion, meets Archer, a twenty-year-old back from the dead with superhuman abilities and a mission. By Shooter & Barry Windsor-Smith. [Color comic; $2.50]

HARBINGER #7. "Flowers for the Living." By Shooter, Lapham, and J. Dixon. [Color comic; $2.50]

MAGNUS ROBOT FIGHTER #14. "The Asylum Saga" Part 2. By Shooter, Gonzales, and Colon.

RAI #5.

SHADOWMAN #3.

SOLAR, MAN OF THE ATOM #11. By Shooter, Windsor-Smith, Layton, and Cavallero. [Color comic; $2.25]

VINTAGE MAGNUS ROBOT FIGHTER Volume 2 #2 (of 4). By Russ Manning. [Color comic; $1.95]

X-O MANOWAR #6.

VIZ COMICS

CRYING FREEMAN PART FOUR #2 (of 7). By Kolke & Ikegami. [Color comic; $4.95]

SANCTUARY #2. By Fumimara & Ikegami. [B&W comic; $4.95]

SILENT MOBIUS: PART II #5 (of 5).

STRIKER: ARMORED WARRIOR #1. Striker's mission: protect Noah's Ark! By Takashige & Minagaga. [B&W comic; $2.75]

VORTEX

LEGENDS OF NASCAR: RICHARD CHILDRESS #12.

MISTER X #15.

NOCTURNAL EMISSIONS #4.

WARNER BOOKS

CATWOMAN.

WEBB GRAPHICS

SF SHORT STORIES #1.

SF SHORT STORIES #2.

ZEN COMICS

ZEN INTERGALACTIC NINJA: VOLUME III #6.

SNEAK PREVIEW

UNDERSTANDING COMICS

THE INVISIBLE ART

BY SCOTT McCLOUD

Heres the first chapter of my new book UNDERSTANDING COMICS, a 180 page essay in comics form about the comics medium.

This first chapter is an attempt to renegotiate the boundaries of our definition , reclaim a thousand-year heritage of comics, and reaffirm comics' limitless potential as an artform. Future chapters explore the forms of visual iconography that make up the vocabulary of comics; how the mind operates between panels; how time functions in comics; how a visual medium portrays invisible forces; how color affects the reading experience; and how comics compares to other media. Some parts of the book are complex and cha lenging (this first chapter is one of the simpler ones) but never dry and, I hope, a ways entertaining.

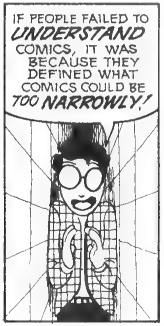
This project s very exciting for me. My thanks to AMAZING HEROES for the chance to show you this first glimpse. UNDERSTANDING COMICS will be available from Tundra Publishing starting in late 1992.

-Scott McCloud

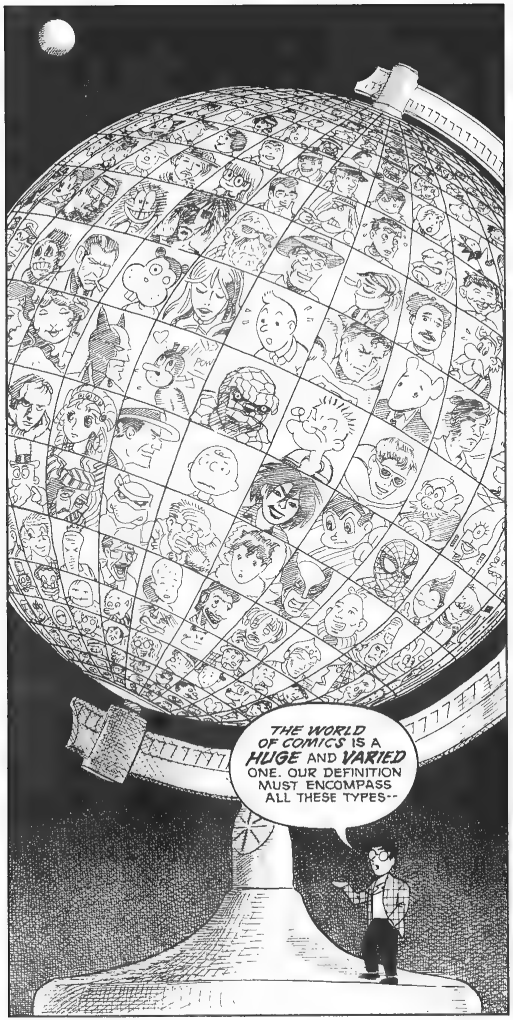
BUT WHEN I WAS IN 8th GRADE, A FRIEND OF MINE (WHO WAS A LOT SMARTER THAN I WAS) CONVINCED ME TO GIVE COMICS ANOTHER LOOK AND LENT ME HIS COLLECTION.
SOON, I WAS HOOKED!
THE RAGGEDY OLD MEN

LETTERING BY BOB LAPPAN

IN LESS THAN A YEAR, I BECAME TOTALLY OBSESSED WITH COMICS! I DECIDED TO BECOME A COMICS ARTIST IN 10th GRADE AND BEGAN TO PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!



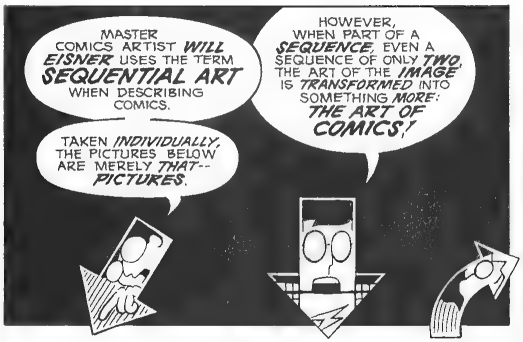
A PROPER DEFINITION, IF WE COULD FIND ONE, MIGHT GIVE LIE TO THE STEREOTYPES--
--AND SHOW THAT THE POTENTIAL OF COMICS IS LIMITLESS AND EXCITING!


THE WORLD OF COMICS IS A HUGE AND VARIED ONE. OUR DEFINITION MUST ENCOMPASS ALL THESE TYPES--

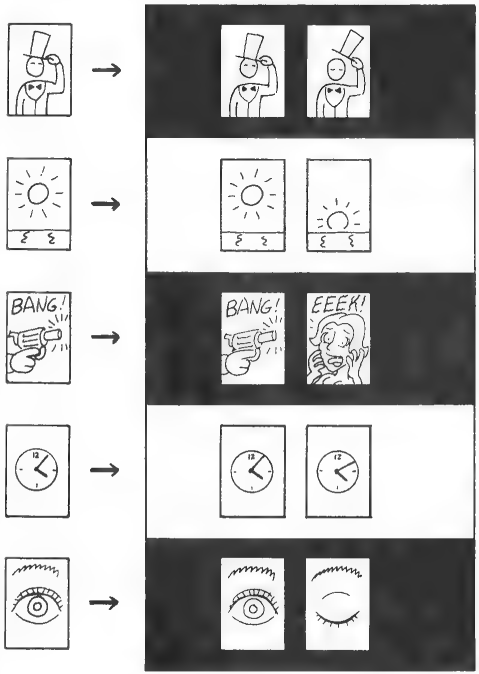
--WHILE NOT BEING SO BROAD AS TO INCLUDE ANYTHING WHICH IS CLEARLY NOT COMICS.

"COMICS" IS THE WORD WORTH DEFINING, AS IT REFERS TO THE MEDIUM ITSELF, NOT A SPECIFIC OBJECT AS "COMIC BOOK" OR "COMIC STRIP" DO.
WE CAN ALL VISUALIZE A COMIC.
COMIC GUY

BUT WHAT--
--IS--
--COMICS?

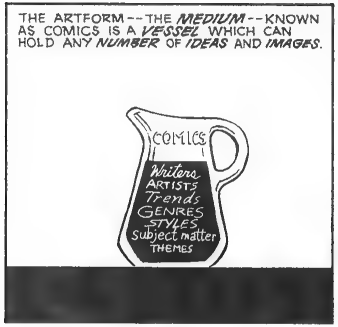

MASTER COMICS ARTIST WILL EISNER USES THE TERM SEQUENTIAL ART WHEN DESCRIBING COMICS.
TAKEN INDIVIDUALLY, THE PICTURES BELOW ARE MERELY THAT-- PICTURES.
HOWEVER, WHEN PART OF A SEQUENCE, EVEN A SEQUENCE OF ONLY TWO, THE ART OF THE IMAGE IS TRANSFORMED INTO SOMETHING MORE: THE ART OF COMICS!

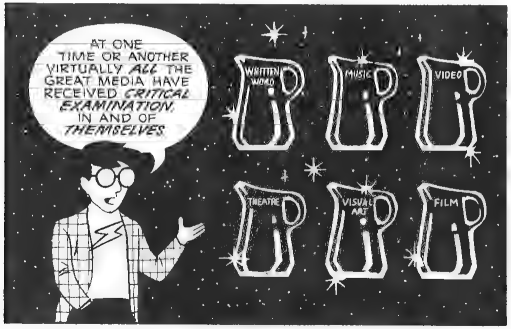
NOTICE THAT THIS DEFINITION IS STRICTLY NEUTRAL ON MATTERS OF STYLE, QUALITY OR SUBJECT MATTER.


BANG!
BANG!
EEEK!

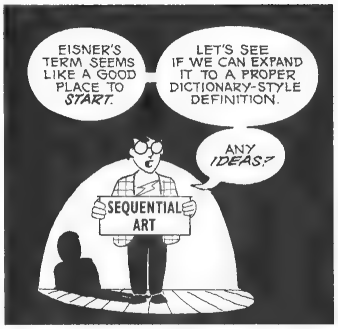
MUCH HAS ALREADY BEEN WRITTEN ON THE VARIOUS SCHOOLS OF COMIC ART, ON PARTICULAR ARTISTS, PARTICULAR TITLES, PARTICULAR TRENDS.

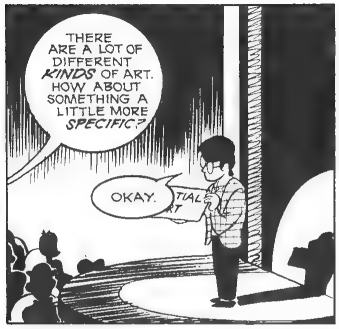
BUT TO DEFINE COMICS, WE MUST FIRST DO A LITTLE AESTHETIC SURGERY AND SEPARATE FORM FROM CONTENT!

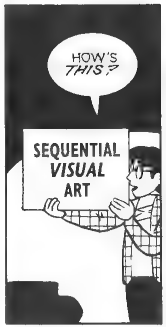


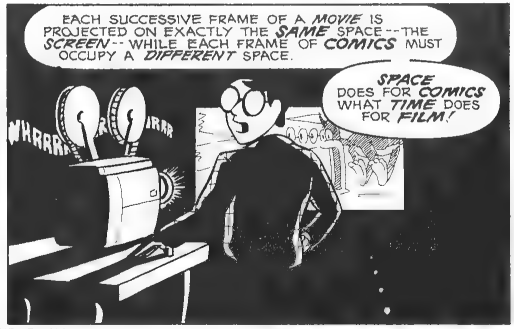


*EISNER'S OWN *COMICS AND SEQUENTIAL ART* BEING A HAPPY EXCEPTION


EISNER'S TERM SEEMS LIKE A GOOD PLACE TO *START*.
LET'S SEE IF WE CAN EXPAND IT TO A PROPER DICTIONARY-STYLE DEFINITION.
ANY *IDEAS*?
SEQUENTIAL ART

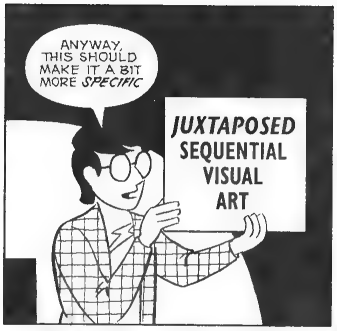




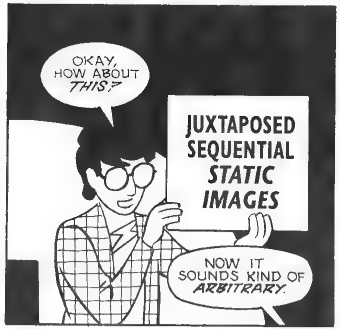

EACH SUCCESSIVE FRAME OF A *MOVIE* IS PROJECTED ON EXACTLY THE *SAME* SPACE--THE *SCREEN*--WHILE EACH FRAME OF *COMICS* MUST OCCUPY A *DIFFERENT* SPACE.
SPACE DOES FOR *COMICS* WHAT *TIME* DOES FOR *FILM*!
WHRRR

*JUXTAPOSED= ADJACENT, SIDE-BY-SIDE
GREAT ART SCHOOL WORD.

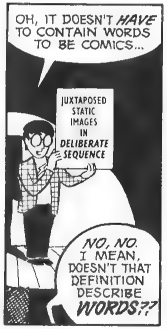
HOWEVER
YOU MIGHT
SAY THAT
BEFORE IT'S
PROJECTED,
FILM IS
JUST A
VERY
VERY
VERY
VERY
SLOW
COMIC!


ANYWAY, THIS SHOULD MAKE IT A BIT MORE SPECIFIC
JUXTAPOSED SEQUENTIAL VISUAL ART

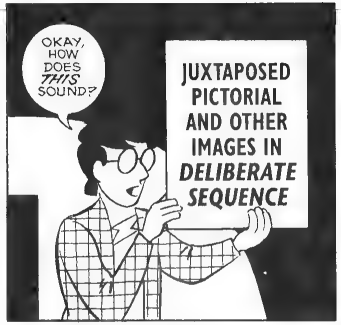
DOES IT HAVE TO SAY "ART"? DOESN'T THAT IMPLY SOME SORT OF VALUE JUDGMENT?
WELL...

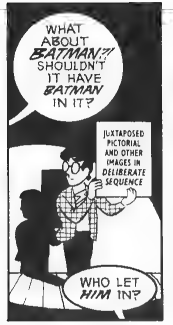

OKAY, HOW ABOUT THIS?
JUXTAPOSED SEQUENTIAL STATIC IMAGES
NOW IT SOUNDS KIND OF ARBITRARY.

OKAY, HOW ABOUT THIS?
JUXTAPOSED STATIC IMAGES IN DELIBERATE SEQUENCE
WHAT ABOUT WORDS?


OH, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO CONTAIN WORDS TO BE COMICS...
JUXTAPOSED STATIC IMAGES IN DELIBERATE SEQUENCE
NO, NO. I MEAN, DOESN'T THAT DEFINITION DESCRIBE WORDS??

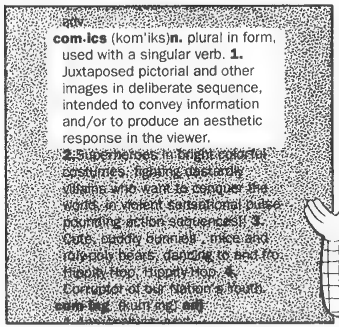
HUH?
LETTERS ARE STATIC IMAGES, RIGHT?
JUXTAPOSED STATIC IMAGES IN DELIBERATE SEQUENCE
WHEN THEY'RE ARRANGED IN A DELIBERATE SEQUENCE, PLACED NEXT TO EACH OTHER, WE CALL THEM WORDS!
YOU TELL 'IM, BOB!


OKAY, HOW DOES THIS SOUND?
JUXTAPOSED PICTORIAL AND OTHER IMAGES IN DELIBERATE SEQUENCE

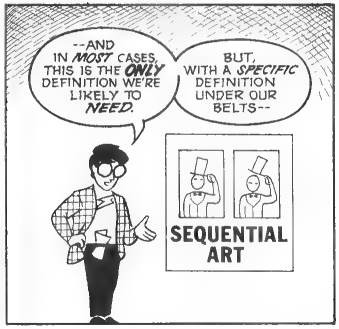

WHAT ABOUT BATMAN?! SHOULDN'T IT HAVE BATMAN IN IT?
JUXTAPOSED PICTORIAL AND OTHER IMAGES IN DELIBERATE SEQUENCE
WHO LET HIM IN?

NO, I MEAN IT! AND WHAT ABOUT THE X-MEN! AND-- -OW!- -HEY! HEY! LET GO OF ME! HEY!
WELL, ANYWAY, THIS SHOULD DO FOR NOW.

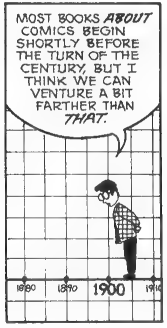
WE'LL JUST TYPE IT UP, ADD A LITTLE BIT ON THE USES OF COMICS, AND--
tap tap tap tap tap
THERE!

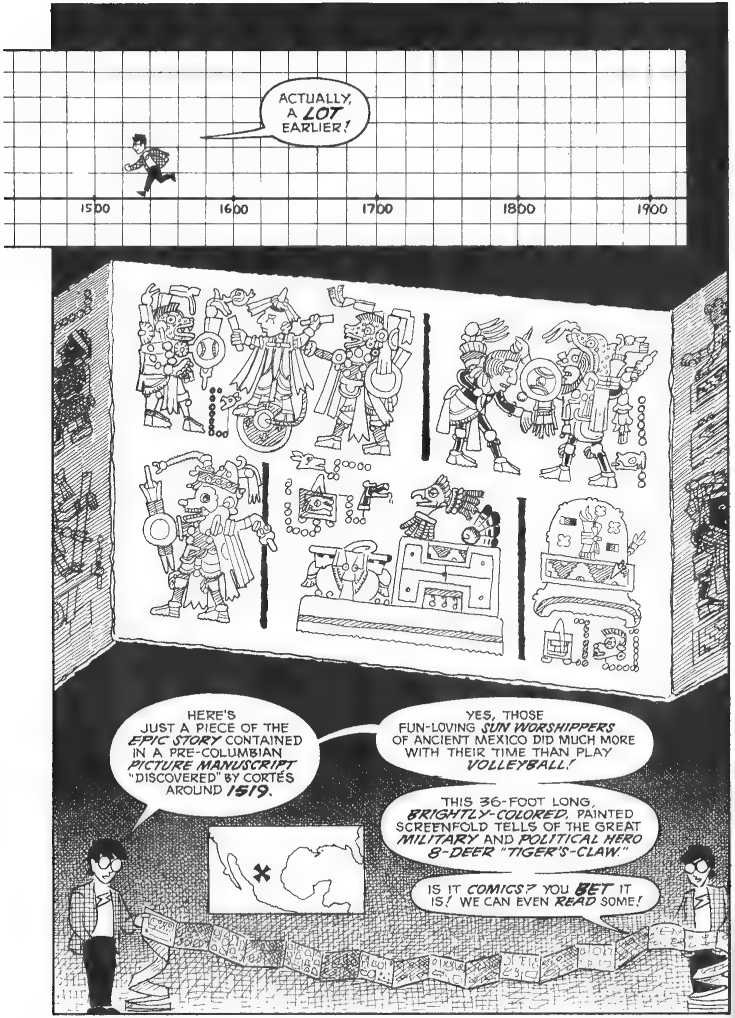

com·ics (kom'iks) n. plural in form, used with a singular verb. 1. Juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer. 2. Superheroes in bright colorful costumes, fighting dastardly villains who want to conquer the world, in violent sensational pulse-pounding action sequences!! 3. Cute, cuddly bunnies, mice and roly-poly bears, dancing to and fro. Hippity hop, Hippity hop. 4. Corruptor of our nation's youth. com·ics (kum'ing) adj.

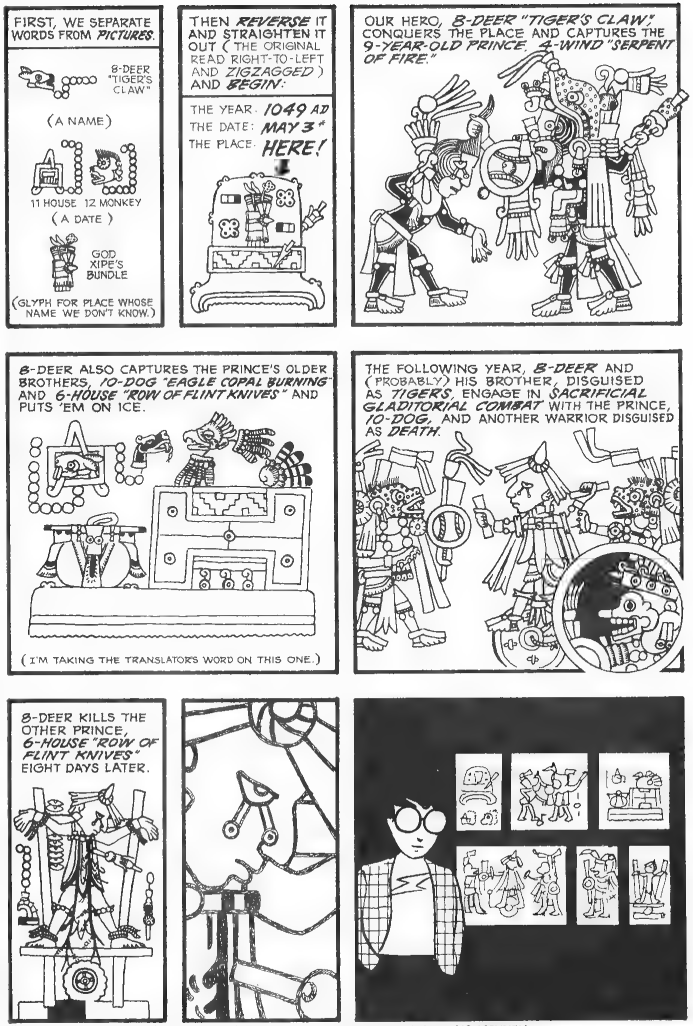
I ADMIT, THIS ISN'T THE SORT OF THING THAT COMES UP A LOT IN CASUAL CONVERSATION--


--AND IN MOST CASES, THIS IS THE ONLY DEFINITION WE'RE LIKELY TO NEED.
BUT, WITH A SPECIFIC DEFINITION UNDER OUR BELTS--
SEQUENTIAL ART

--PERHAPS WE CAN SHED SOME NEW LIGHT ON THE HISTORY OF COMICS.

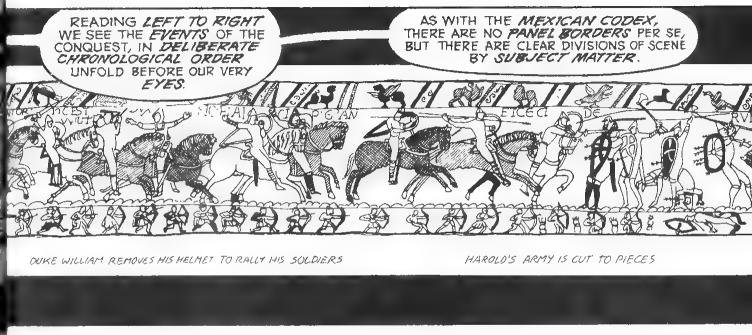

MOST BOOKS ABOUT COMICS BEGIN SHORTLY BEFORE THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, BUT I THINK WE CAN VENTURE A BIT FARTHER THAN THAT.
1880
1890
1900

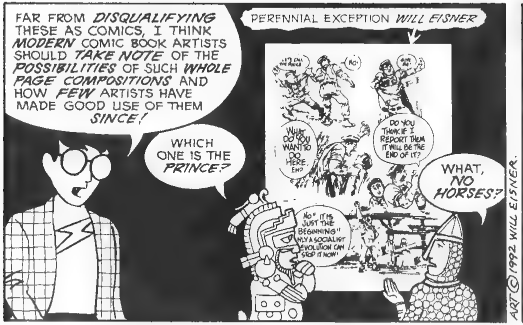

ACTUALLY, A LOT EARLIER!
1500
1600
1700
1800
1900
HERE'S JUST A PIECE OF THE EPIC STORY CONTAINED IN A PRE-COLUMBIAN PICTURE MANUSCRIPT "DISCOVERED" BY CORTÉS AROUND 1519.
YES, THOSE FUN-LOVING SUN WORSHIPPERS OF ANCIENT MEXICO DID MUCH MORE WITH THEIR TIME THAN PLAY VOLLEYBALL!
THIS 36-FOOT LONG, BRIGHTLY-COLORED, PAINTED SCREENFOLD TELLS OF THE GREAT MILITARY AND POLITICAL HERO 8-DEER "TIGER'S-CLAW."
IS IT COMICS? YOU BET IT IS! WE CAN EVEN READ SOME!

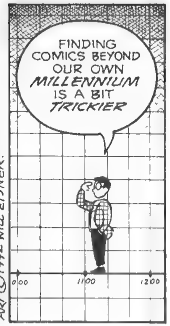

FIRST, WE SEPARATE WORDS FROM PICTURES.
8-DEER "TIGER'S CLAW"
(A NAME)
11 HOUSE 12 MONKEY
(A DATE)
GOD XIPE'S BUNDLE
(GLYPH FOR PLACE WHOSE NAME WE DON'T KNOW.)
THEN REVERSE IT AND STRAIGHTEN IT OUT (THE ORIGINAL READ RIGHT-TO-LEFT AND ZIGZAGGED) AND BEGIN:
THE YEAR: 1049 AD
THE DATE: MAY 3*
THE PLACE: HERE!
OUR HERO, 8-DEER "TIGER'S CLAW," CONQUERS THE PLACE AND CAPTURES THE 9-YEAR-OLD PRINCE: 4-WIND "SERPENT OF FIRE."
8-DEER ALSO CAPTURES THE PRINCE'S OLDER BROTHERS, 10-DOG "EAGLE COPAL BURNING" AND 6-HOUSE "ROW OF FLINT KNIVES" AND PUTS 'EM ON ICE.
(I'M TAKING THE TRANSLATOR'S WORD ON THIS ONE.)
THE FOLLOWING YEAR, 8-DEER AND (PROBABLY) HIS BROTHER, DISGUISED AS TIGERS, ENGAGE IN SACRIFICIAL GLADITORIAL COMBAT WITH THE PRINCE, 10-DOG, AND ANOTHER WARRIOR DISGUISED AS DEATH.
8-DEER KILLS THE OTHER PRINCE, 6-HOUSE "ROW OF FLINT KNIVES" EIGHT DAYS LATER.

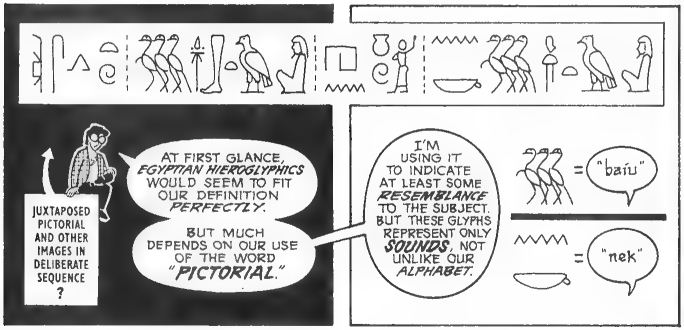
*WE KNOW THE YEAR; I'M JUST GUESSING AT THE DATE REPRESENTED BY "12 MONKEY"

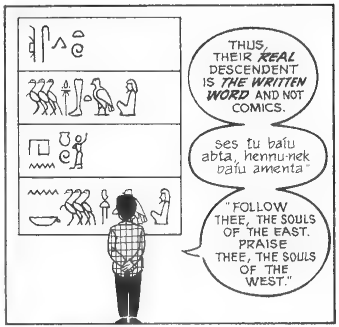
HUNDREDS OF YEARS BEFORE CORTÉS BEGAN COLLECTING COMICS, FRANCE PRODUCED THE STRIKINGLY SIMILAR WORK WE CALL THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY.
THIS 230 FOOT LONG TAPESTRY DETAILS THE NORMAN CONQUEST OF ENGLAND, BEGINNING IN 1066.
TRANSLATION: THE BATTLE RAGES
BISHOP ODIN ENCOURAGES HIS SOLDIERS


READING LEFT TO RIGHT WE SEE THE EVENTS OF THE CONQUEST, IN DELIBERATE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER UNFOLD BEFORE OUR VERY EYES.
AS WITH THE MEXICAN CODEX, THERE ARE NO PANEL BORDERS PER SE, BUT THERE ARE CLEAR DIVISIONS OF SCENE BY SUBJECT MATTER.
DUKE WILLIAM REMOVES HIS HELMET TO RALLY HIS SOLDIERS
HAROLD'S ARMY IS CUT TO PIECES


FAR FROM DISQUALIFYING THESE AS COMICS, I THINK MODERN COMIC BOOK ARTISTS SHOULD TAKE NOTE OF THE POSSIBILITIES OF SUCH WHOLE PAGE COMPOSITIONS AND HOW FEW ARTISTS HAVE MADE GOOD USE OF THEM SINCE!
PERENNIAL EXCEPTION WILL EISNER
WHICH ONE IS THE PRINCE?
WHAT, NO HORSES?
ART © 1992 WILL EISNER


FINDING COMICS BEYOND OUR OWN MILLENNIUM IS A BIT TRICKIER
900
1100
1200

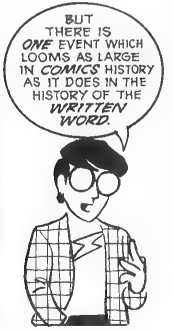

JUXTAPOSED PICTORIAL AND OTHER IMAGES IN DELIBERATE SEQUENCE ?
AT FIRST GLANCE, EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHICS WOULD SEEM TO FIT OUR DEFINITION PERFECTLY.
BUT MUCH DEPENDS ON OUR USE OF THE WORD "PICTORIAL."
I'M USING IT TO INDICATE AT LEAST SOME RESEMBLANCE TO THE SUBJECT. BUT THESE GLYPHS REPRESENT ONLY SOUNDS, NOT UNLIKE OUR ALPHABET.
= "baiu"
= "nek"


THUS, THEIR REAL DESCENDENT IS THE WRITTEN WORD AND NOT COMICS.
ses tu baiu abta, henmu-nek baiu amenta
"FOLLOW THEE, THE SOULS OF THE EAST. PRAISE THEE, THE SOULS OF THE WEST."

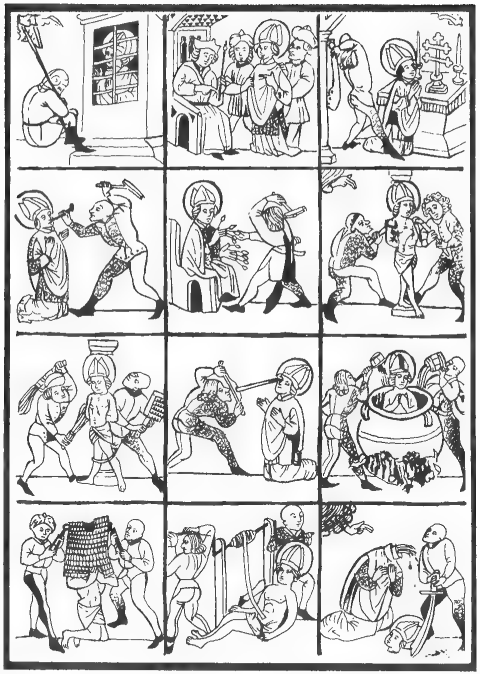
EGYPTIAN PAINTING IS ANOTHER MATTER. SOME, LIKE THIS, MAY SEEM TO BE CONCERNED WITH SEQUENCE, BUT ARE ACTUALLY SHOWING TWO DIFFERENT LOCATIONS, EVENTS AND CASTS, GROUPED ONLY BY SUBJECT.
SPLITTING HAIRS? MAYBE...

I'LL GLADLY ADMIT THAT I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE OR WHEN COMICS ORIGINATED. LET OTHERS WRESTLE WITH THAT ONE
?B.C
?A.D.

PREHISTORIC ART, TRAJAN'S COLUMN, GREEK PAINTING, JAPANESE SCROLLS... ALL THESE HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED AND ALL SHOULD BE EXPLORED.

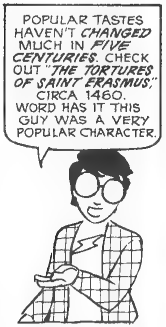

BUT THERE IS ONE EVENT WHICH LOOMS AS LARGE IN COMICS' HISTORY AS IT DOES IN THE HISTORY OF THE WRITTEN WORD.

THE INVENTION OF PRINTING.



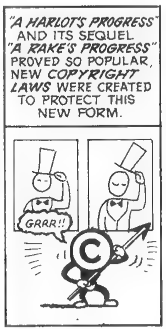
ART RESTORED FOR CLARITY - OTHERWISE UNCHANGED

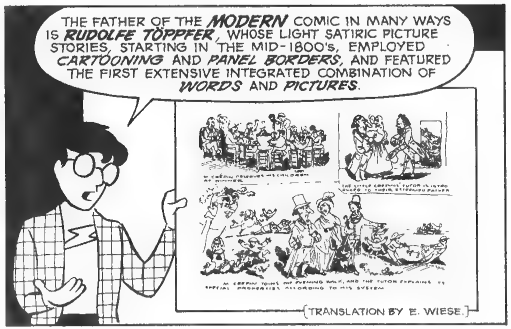
WITH THE INVENTION OF PRINTING, THE ART-FORM WHICH HAD BEEN A DIVERSION OF THE *RICH* AND *POWERFUL* NOW COULD BE ENJOYED BY *EVERYONE!*


POPULAR TASTES HAVEN'T *CHANGED* MUCH IN *FIVE CENTURIES*. CHECK OUT "*THE TORTURES OF SAINT ERASMUS*," CIRCA 1460. WORD HAS IT THIS GUY WAS A VERY POPULAR CHARACTER.

THE SOPHISTICATION OF THE PICTURE-STORY DID *GROW*, HOWEVER, REACHING GREAT HEIGHTS IN THE NIMBLE HANDS OF *WILLIAM HOGARTH*.
HERE IS A TINY PIECE (ABOUT *ONE TWENTIETH*) OF THE SECOND PLATE FROM HOGARTH'S SIX-PLATE PICTURE-STORY "*A HARLOT'S PROGRESS*," PUBLISHED IN 1731.
DESPITE THE LOW "*PANEL-COUNT*," THESE LUSH, RENDERED PICTURES TELL A STORY RICH IN DETAIL AND MOTIVATED BY STRONG SOCIAL CONCERNS.

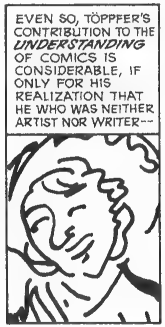
HOGARTH'S STORIES WERE FIRST EXHIBITED AS A SERIES OF *PAINTINGS* AND LATER SOLD AS A PORTFOLIO OF *ENGRAVINGS*.
BOTH THE PAINTINGS AND ENGRAVINGS WERE DESIGNED TO BE VIEWED *SIDE-BY-SIDE --IN SEQUENCE!*

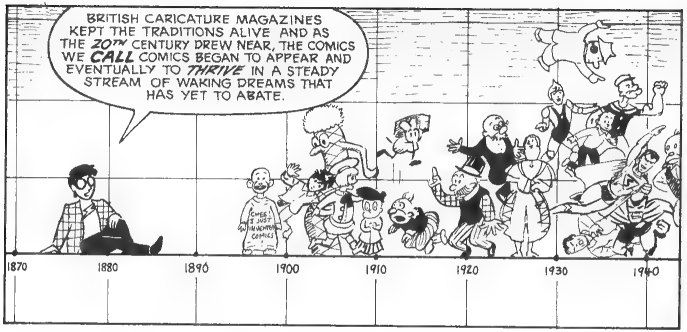

"*A HARLOT'S PROGRESS*" AND ITS SEQUEL "*A RAKE'S PROGRESS*" PROVED SO POPULAR, NEW *COPYRIGHT LAWS* WERE CREATED TO PROTECT THIS NEW FORM.
GRRR!!
©


THE FATHER OF THE *MODERN* COMIC IN MANY WAYS IS *RUDOLFE TÖPPFER*, WHOSE LIGHT SATIRIC PICTURE STORIES, STARTING IN THE MID-1800'S, EMPLOYED *CARTOONING* AND *PANEL BORDERS*, AND FEATURED THE FIRST EXTENSIVE INTEGRATED COMBINATION OF *WORDS* AND *PICTURES*.
TRANSLATION BY E. WIESE

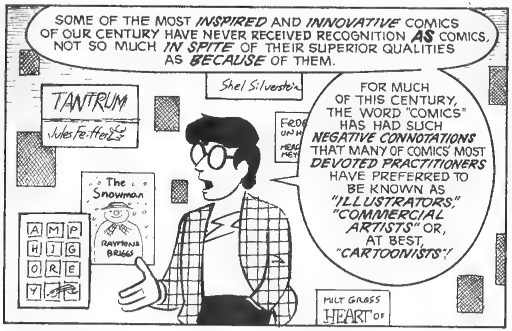
UNFORTUNATELY, TÖPPFER HIMSELF FAILED TO GRASP AT FIRST THE FULL POTENTIAL OF HIS INVENTION, SEEING IT AS A MERE *DIVERSION*, A SIMPLE *HOBBY*..

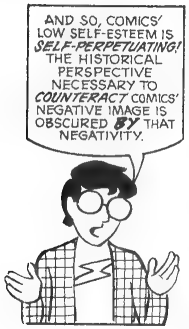
"IF FOR THE FUTURE, HE [TÖPPFER] WOULD CHOOSE A LESS FRIVOLOUS SUBJECT AND RESTRICT HIMSELF A LITTLE, HE WOULD PRODUCE THINGS BEYOND ALL CONCEPTION."
-Goethe


EVEN SO, TÖPPFER'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE *UNDERSTANDING* OF COMICS IS CONSIDERABLE, IF ONLY FOR HIS REALIZATION THAT HE WHO WAS NEITHER ARTIST NOR WRITER--


BRITISH CARICATURE MAGAZINES KEPT THE TRADITIONS ALIVE AND AS THE 20TH CENTURY DREW NEAR, THE COMICS WE CALL COMICS BEGAN TO APPEAR AND EVENTUALLY TO THRIVE IN A STEADY STREAM OF WAKING DREAMS THAT HAS YET TO ABATE.
1870
1880
1890
1900
1910
1920
1930
1940

BUT EVEN IN THIS CENTURY, OUR DEFINITION CAN HELP TO ILLUMINATE THE WORKS OF SOME UNSUNG HEROES.
JUXTAPOSED PICTORIAL AND OTHER IMAGES IN DELIBERATE SEQUENCE


SOME OF THE MOST INSPIRED AND INNOVATIVE COMICS OF OUR CENTURY HAVE NEVER RECEIVED RECOGNITION AS COMICS, NOT SO MUCH IN SPITE OF THEIR SUPERIOR QUALITIES AS BECAUSE OF THEM.
TANTRUM
Jules Feiffer
Shel Silverstein
The Snowman
RAYMOND BRIGGS
FOR MUCH OF THIS CENTURY, THE WORD "COMICS" HAS HAD SUCH NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS THAT MANY OF COMICS' MOST DEVOTED PRACTITIONERS HAVE PREFERRED TO BE KNOWN AS "ILLUSTRATORS," "COMMERCIAL ARTISTS" OR, AT BEST, "CARTOONISTS"!
MILT GLASS
HEART OF


AND SO, COMICS' LOW SELF-ESTEEM IS SELF-PERPETUATING! THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE NECESSARY TO COUNTERACT COMICS' NEGATIVE IMAGE IS OBSCURED BY THAT NEGATIVITY.

WOODCUT ARTIST LYND WARD IS ONE SUCH MISSING LINK: WARD'S SILENT "WOODCUT NOVELS" ARE POWERFUL MODERN FABLES, NOW PRAISED BY COMICS ARTISTS, BUT SELDOM RECOGNIZED AS COMICS.
FROM WARD'S GOD'S MAN, 1929

ARTISTS LIKE WARD AND FRANCE'S FRANK MASEREEL SAID MUCH THROUGH THEIR WOODCUTS ABOUT THE POTENTIAL OF COMICS, BUT FEW IN THE COMICS COMMUNITY OF THE DAY COULD GET THE MESSAGE.
THEIR DEFINITION OF COMICS, THEN AS NOW, WAS SIMPLY TOO NARROW TO INCLUDE SUCH WORK.
FROM FRANK MASEREEL'S PASSIONATE JOURNEY, 1919

QUITE A DIFFERENT CASE IS MAX ERNST'S SURREAL "COLLAGE NOVEL," A WEEK OF KINDNESS.
THIS 182 PLATE SEQUENCE OF COLLAGES IS WIDELY CONSIDERED A MASTERPIECE OF 20TH CENTURY ART, BUT NO ART HISTORY TEACHER WOULD DREAM OF CALLING IT "COMICS"!
YET, DESPITE THE LACK OF A CONVENTIONAL STORY, THERE IS NO MISTAKING THE CENTRAL ROLE WHICH SEQUENCE PLAYS IN THE WORK. ERNST DOESN'T WANT YOU TO BROWSE THE THING, HE WANTS YOU TO READ IT!

IF WE DON'T EXCLUDE *PHOTOGRAPHY* FROM OUR DEFINITION, THEN HALF OF *AMERICA* HAS BEEN IN COMICS AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER.

IN *SOME* COUNTRIES, PHOTO-COMICS ARE, IN FACT, QUITE *POPULAR*.

MEANWHILE, *PICTURES IN SEQUENCE* ARE FINALLY BEING RECOGNIZED AS THE EXCELLENT *COMMUNICATION TOOL* THAT THEY ARE, BUT *STILL* NOBODY REFERS TO THEM AS *COMICS!* "*DIAGRAMS*" SOUNDS MORE *DIGNIFIED*, I SUPPOSE.

1 2 3 4

FROM *STAINED GLASS WINDOWS* SHOWING BIBLICAL SCENES IN ORDER TO *MONET'S SERIES PAINTINGS*, TO YOUR *CAR OWNER'S MANUAL*, COMICS TURN UP *ALL OVER* WHEN *SEQUENTIAL ART* IS EMPLOYED AS A DEFINITION.

THANKS TO MATT FEAZELL FOR THE SUGGESTIONS!

com·ics (kom'iks) **n.** plural in form, used with a singular verb. **1.** Juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer.

FOR ALL THE DOORS THAT OUR DEFINITION *OPENS*, THERE IS ONE WHICH IT *CLOSES*.

SINGLE PANELS LIKE *THIS* ONE ARE OFTEN *LUMPED IN* WITH COMICS, YET THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A SEQUENCE OF *ONE!*

"Mommy, why ain't I Juxtaposed?"

SUCH SINGLE PANELS MIGHT BE CLASSIFIED AS "*COMIC ART*" IN THE SENSE THAT THEY DERIVE PART OF THEIR *VISUAL VOCABULARY* FROM COMICS--

BUT I SAY THEY'RE NO MORE *COMICS* THAN THIS STILL OF *HUMPHREY BOGART* IS *FILM!*

HI, BOGEY.

THEY ARE *CARTOONS*, AS AM *I*, AND THERE IS A *LONG-STANDING RELATIONSHIP* BETWEEN COMICS AND CARTOONS.

--*BUT THEY ARE NOT THE SAME THING!* ONE IS AN APPROACH TO *PICTURE-MAKING*-- A *STYLE*, IF YOU LIKE--WHILE THE OTHER IS A *MEDIUM* WHICH OFTEN *EMPLOYS* THAT APPROACH.

HEY!

MORE ON THIS *LATER*.

THIS SAME *SINGLE PANEL* MIGHT ALSO BE LABELLED COMICS FOR ITS JUXTAPOSITION OF *WORDS* AND PICTURES.

"Mommy, why ain't I Juxtaposed?"

A GREAT MAJORITY OF MODERN COMICS *DO* FEATURE WORDS AND PICTURES IN COMBINATION AND IT'S A SUBJECT WORTHY OF STUDY, BUT WHEN USED AS A *DEFINITION* FOR COMICS, I'VE FOUND IT TO BE A LITTLE TOO *RESTRICTIVE* FOR MY TASTE.

OF COURSE, IF ANYONE WANTS TO WRITE A BOOK TAKING THE *OPPOSITE* VIEW, YOU CAN BET I'LL BE THE FIRST IN LINE TO *BUY* A COPY!

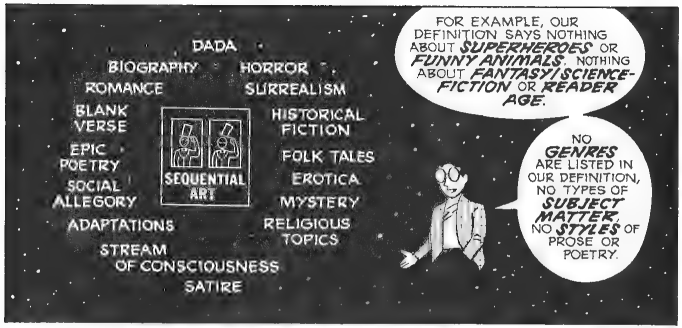
IF COMICS' SPECTACULARLY VARIED *PAST* IS ANY INDICATION, COMICS' *FUTURE* WILL BE VIRTUALLY *IMPOSSIBLE* TO PREDICT USING THE STANDARDS OF THE *PRESENT*.

BUT OUR DEFINITION CAN OFFER US SOME *CLUES*.

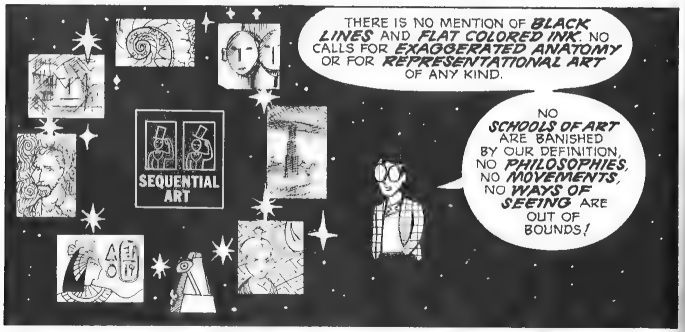
1980 1990 2000 2010 2020 2030 2040

AND *THIS* TIME, THE SECRET IS NOT IN WHAT THE DEFINITION *SAYS* BUT IN WHAT IT *DOESN'T* SAY.

SEQUENTIAL ART


DADA
BIOGRAPHY
HORROR
ROMANCE
SURREALISM
BLANK VERSE
HISTORICAL FICTION
EPIC POETRY
FOLK TALES
SOCIAL ALLEGORY
EROTICA
MYSTERY
ADAPTATIONS
RELIGIOUS TOPICS
STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS
SATIRE
SEQUENTIAL ART
FOR EXAMPLE, OUR DEFINITION SAYS NOTHING ABOUT SUPERHEROES OR FUNNY ANIMALS. NOTHING ABOUT FANTASY/SCIENCE-FICTION OR READER AGE.
NO GENRES ARE LISTED IN OUR DEFINITION, NO TYPES OF SUBJECT MATTER, NO STYLES OF PROSE OR POETRY.

NOTHING IS SAID ABOUT PAPER AND INK. NO PRINTING PROCESS IS MENTIONED. PRINTING ITSELF ISN'T EVEN SPECIFIED! NOTHING IS SAID ABOUT TECHNICAL PENS OR BRISTOL BOARD OR WINDSOR & NEWTON FINEST SABLE SERIES 7 NUMBER TWO BRUSHES!
NO MATERIALS ARE RULED OUT BY OUR DEFINITION, NO TOOLS ARE PROHIBITED.
SEQUENTIAL ART
SPRAY PAINT


THERE IS NO MENTION OF BLACK LINES AND FLAT COLORED INK. NO CALLS FOR EXAGGERATED ANATOMY OR FOR REPRESENTATIONAL ART OF ANY KIND.
NO SCHOOLS OF ART ARE BANISHED BY OUR DEFINITION, NO PHILOSOPHIES, NO MOVEMENTS, NO WAYS OF SEEING ARE OUT OF BOUNDS!
SEQUENTIAL ART

THOSE OF YOU WHO MAKE COMICS FOR A LIVING--OR WOULD LIKE TO, SOMEDAY--PROBABLY KNOW THAT KEEPING UP WITH ALL THE ADVANCES IN TODAY'S COMICS IS A FULL-TIME JOB.
THERE ARE SO MANY COMICS IN PRINT TODAY THAT IT WOULD TAKE AN ARMY OF READERS TO STUDY THEM ALL.

HOWEVER MUCH WE MAY TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE WORLD OF COMICS AROUND US, A PART OF THAT WORLD WILL ALWAYS LIE IN SHADOW--A MYSTERY.

I'LL DO MY BEST IN THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS TO SHED LIGHT ON THAT UNSEEN SIDE, BUT AS WE FOCUS ON THE WORLD OF COMICS AS IT IS, IT SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND AT ALL TIMES THAT THIS WORLD IS ONLY ONE--

--OF MANY POSSIBLE WORLDS!

OUR ATTEMPTS TO DEFINE COMICS ARE AN ON-GOING PROCESS WHICH WON'T END ANYTIME SOON.

A NEW GENERATION WILL NO DOUBT REJECT WHATEVER THIS ONE FINALLY DECIDES TO ACCEPT AND TRY ONCE MORE TO RE-INVENT COMICS.

AND SO THEY SHOULD.

HERE'S TO THE GREAT DEBATE!

Art by Walt Simonson

How Good is Dangerous Times from Evolution Comics?

T.M. Maple on pages 74-75 of Amazing Heroes #196 wrote:

About Vidorix the Druid: "Kondratiev [the author] does a good job of recreating the atmosphere and feel of the time. The art is sometimes compelling."

About Beleagean Days: "Cleverly set up. The various groups interact in unexpected and subtle ways. Obviously, some thought has gone into this."

Grade * * * ½

About the book: "Dangerous Times makes good strides towards reaching Evolution's goal, 'Comic Books That Don't Insult Your Intelligence.'"

Mike Gunderloy, Factsheet Five #38: "Beleagean Days is fun, a science fiction comic in the grand space operatic tradition, with heroes and villains and strange aliens on a giant disabled starship careening out of control."

Mike Kaluta: "A unique twist on the ol' time travel story. Vidorix the Druid is beyond entertainment, it's a story that casts insight into the Celtic view of the world. Alexei is a superb writer."

Capital City Distribution catalogue described the first issue: "This story is very good with very nice art."

NOW read it for yourself! Available from your distributor in the March catalogs (for May shipping) or order directly from

Evolution Comics.
PO Box 1028, Gracie Station
New York, NY 10028

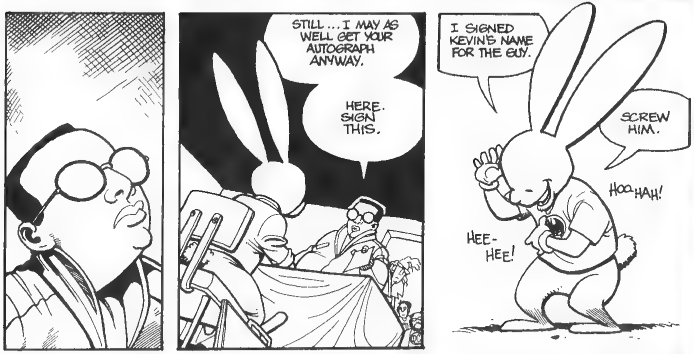
Issue 1, 1st printing - $3.00 -- 2nd ptg $1.75 -- Mike Kaluta cover
Issue 2, 1st ptg - $2.50 -- 2nd ptg $1.75 -- Murphy Anderson cover
Issue 3, 1st Ptg - $2.50 -- 2nd ptg $1.95 -- Marshall Rogers cover
Issue 4, 1st Ptg - $2.50 -- 2nd ptg $1.95 -- George Perez cover
Issue 5, new issue (1st printing only) $1.95 -- Walt Simonson cover
Include $1.00 per order to cover postage and cardboard backing.

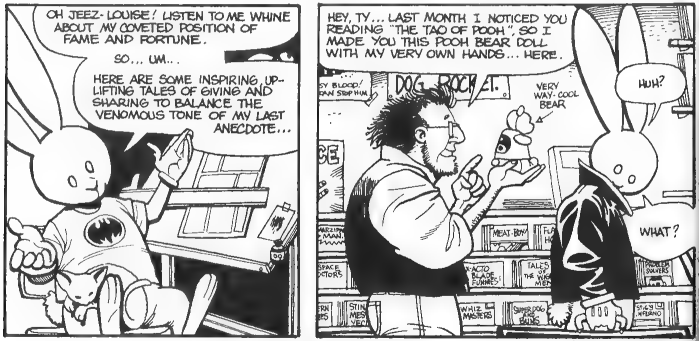
Oh, and one more quotation before we go: "Very nice" - Stan Lee

TY TEMPLETON FUNNIES

OVER THE YEARS IN AMAZING HEROES YOU'VE READ COUNTLESS ARTICLES ABOUT COMICS PROFESSIONALS. WHO CAN FORGET SUCH FEATURES FROM THE PAST AS "ARTHUR ADAMS' CHRISTMAS RECIPES"... "TEN WAYS TO THINNER THIGHS WITH IRV NOVICK" OR "GO ON A DREAM DATE WITH NORM BREYFOGLE"? WELL, WE THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME FOR A STORY ABOUT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE, YES... SIT BACK AND READ, IF YOU DARE, OF ENCOUNTERS WITH...
FANS!
SO, WHO ARE YOU?
MY NAME'S TY. WHO'M I TALKING TO?
I DIDN'T MEAN YOUR NAME. I CAN READ... I MEAN, WHO ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU HERE?
AN HONEST-TO-GOD, TRUE-LIFE ADVENTURE.
OH... WELL, I'M A CARTOONIST. I'VE MOSTLY BEEN WORKING IN THE INDEPENDENTS BUT NOWADAYS I'M DRAWING FOR D.C. ACTUALLY, I'VE ALREADY DONE A FEW ISSUES OF JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL.
WHAT ABOUT KEVIN MCGUIRE? HE DRAWS JUSTICE LEAGUE! WHY ISN'T HE DRAWING IT ANY MORE?
I DON'T KNOW. HE'S DOING OTHER PROJECTS, I SUPPOSE...
WHAT OTHER PROJECTS? WHERE IS HE?
I LIKE KEVIN.
HEY, SO DO I. BIG SHOES TO FILL.
TY TEMPLETON D.C. MAGE-ULATE
SO WHY'D THEY HIRE YOU? ISN'T THAT GUY SITTING NEXT TO YOU MIKE MIGNOLA? WHY ISN'T MIKE DRAWING JUSTICE LEAGUE?
I LIKE MIKE...
©1992 Ty Templeton.
SINCERE PAGE ONE

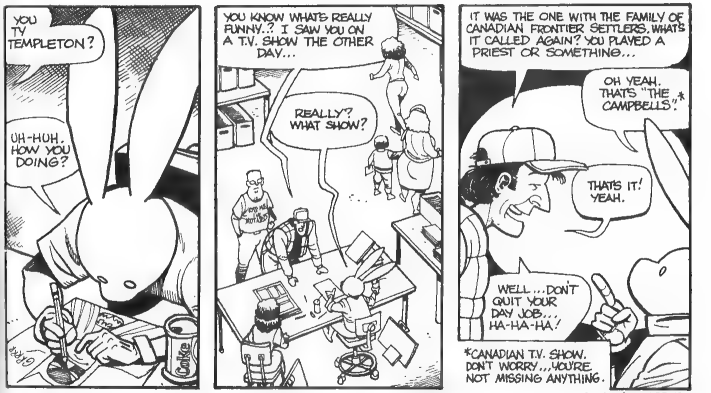
THAT WAS THE EDITOR'S DECISION... BESIDES, MIKE IS PROBABLY QUITE BUSY WITH OTHER ASSIGNMENTS...
YES, TY. I'M PRETTY BUSY WITH OTHER ASSIGNMENTS.
IT'S NOT GOING TO BE THE SAME WITHOUT KEVIN.
I'M GOING TO MISS KEVIN.
LIFE GOES ON.
SO ITS YOU NOW, HUH?
YUP.
HMM M...




OH JEEZ- LOUISE! LISTEN TO ME WHINE ABOUT MY COVETED POSITION OF FAME AND FORTUNE.
SO... UM...
HERE ARE SOME INSPIRING, UP-LIFTING TALES OF GIVING AND SHARING TO BALANCE THE VENOMOUS TONE OF MY LAST ANECDOTE...
HEY, TY... LAST MONTH I NOTICED YOU READING "THE TAO OF POOH", SO I MADE YOU THIS POOH BEAR DOLL WITH MY VERY OWN HANDS... HERE.
VERY WAY-COOL BEAR
HUH?
WHAT?

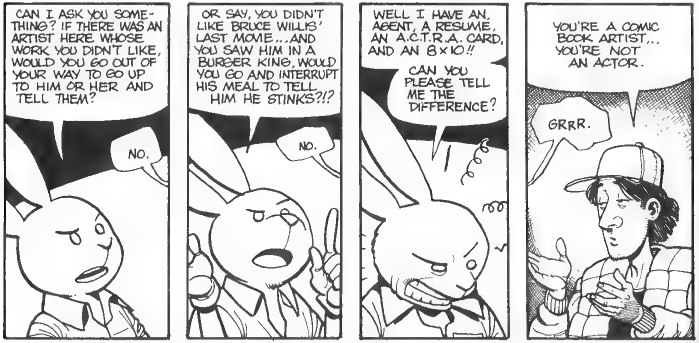
FACTUAL PAGE TWO

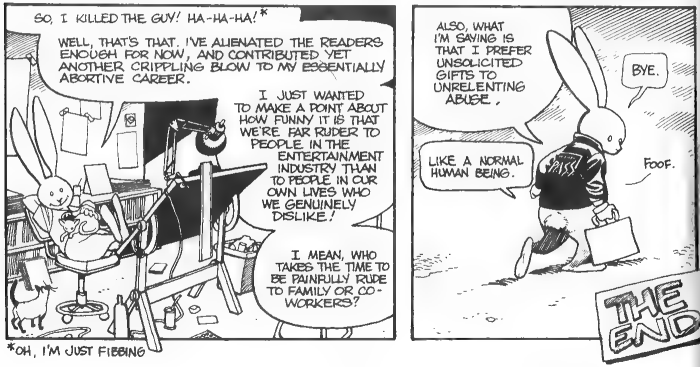
I HAVE AN ORIGINAL DAVE GIBBONS PAGE FROM THE WATCHMEN. I'LL TRADE IT TO YOU FOR A PAGE FROM ST16'S INFERNO.
WELL. ALL RIGHT.
REALLY?
I THINK THOSE SINGING TEDDY BEARS YOU DID WAS JUST WONDERFUL AND I HOPE YOU DON'T THINK ME TOO FORWARD IF I ASK YOU OUT TO DINNER.
WHO ARE YOU?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
MY INSTINCTS SAY 'YES'.
I STILL HAVE THE WATCHMEN PAGE AND THE WAY-COOL BEAR BUT JO-ANN EVENTUALLY HAD TO GO BACK HOME.
I SUPPOSE I COULD GO ON AND ON LIKE THIS ABOUT PLEASANT PEOPLE I MET AT CONVENTIONS, AND YOU KNOW, TRUTH TO TELL, MOST FANS ARE A GENUINE JOY...
BUT I'D RATHER TELL ANOTHER STORY ABOUT SOMEONE WHO ANNOYED ME CEASELESSLY.
NOW WHAT'S THAT SAY ABOUT ME, HMM?


YOU TY TEMPLETON?
UH-HUH. HOW YOU DOING?
YOU KNOW WHAT'S REALLY FUNNY..? I SAW YOU ON A T.V. SHOW THE OTHER DAY...
REALLY? WHAT SHOW?
IT WAS THE ONE WITH THE FAMILY OF CANADIAN FRONTIER SETTLERS. WHAT'S IT CALLED AGAIN? YOU PLAYED A PRIEST OR SOMETHING...
OH YEAH. THAT'S "THE CAMPBELLS".*
THAT'S IT! YEAH.
WELL... DON'T QUIT YOUR DAY JOB... HA-HA-HA!
*CANADIAN T.V. SHOW. DON'T WORRY,, YOU'RE NOT MISSING ANYTHING.

GENUINE PAGE THREE

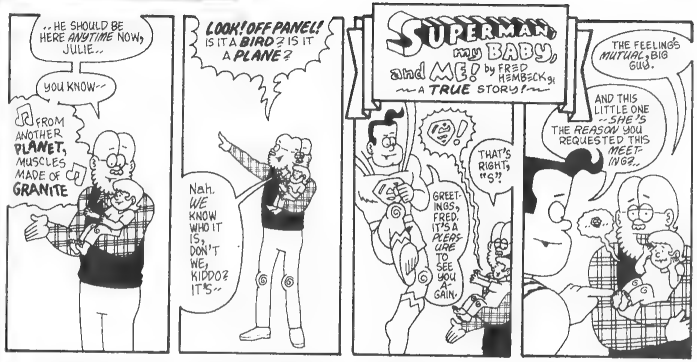
SORRY YOU DIDN'T LIKE IT. I GOT A COP SHOW COMING UP ON THE CBC. THAT'S KIND OF FUN. YOU MIGHT LIKE THAT.
IT'S NOT THAT I... WELL, IT'S JUST THAT... YOU'RE A CARTOONIST, NOT AN ACTOR. IT'S OKAY! DON'T QUIT YER DAY JOB!
ACTUALLY, ACTING IS MY DAY JOB SINCE AUDITIONS AND SHOOTS USUALLY GO ON DURING THE DAY.
I DRAW AT NIGHT MOSTLY.
BUT, YOU'RE NOT AN ACTOR... YOU DRAW COMICS!
CAN'T I DO BOTH?
DON'T FEEL BAD, GUY. I THINK YOU'RE A REALLY GOOD COMIC BOOK ARTIST.
THANK-YOU.
SO IT'S NOT IMPORTANT HOW YOU DO ON SOME SILLY SHOW.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DROP IT.
HEY, NOT EVERYBODY'S A GREAT ACTOR. IT'S OKAY...


CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING? IF THERE WAS AN ARTIST HERE WHOSE WORK YOU DIDN'T LIKE, WOULD YOU GO OUT OF YOUR WAY TO GO UP TO HIM OR HER AND TELL THEM?
NO.
OR, SAY, YOU DIDN'T LIKE BRUCE WILLIS' LAST MOVIE... AND YOU SAW HIM IN A BURGER KING. WOULD YOU GO AND INTERRUPT HIS MEAL TO TELL HIM HE STINKS?!?
NO.
WELL I HAVE AN AGENT, A RESUME, AN A.C.T.R.A. CARD, AND AN 8 X 10!!
CAN YOU PLEASE TELL ME THE DIFFERENCE?
YOU'RE A COMIC BOOK ARTIST... YOU'RE NOT AN ACTOR.
GRRR.

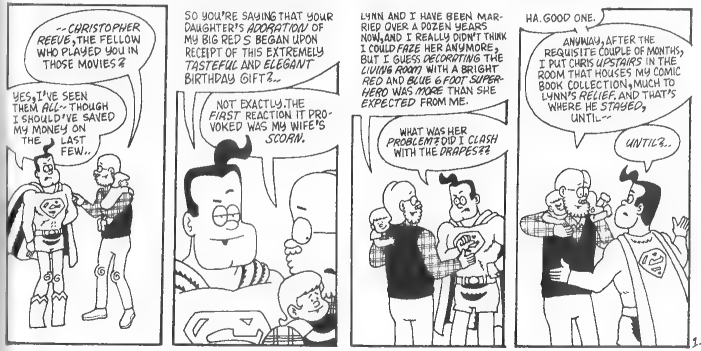

SO, I KILLED THE GUY! HA-HA-HA!*
WELL, THAT'S THAT. I'VE ALIENATED THE READERS ENOUGH FOR NOW, AND CONTRIBUTED YET ANOTHER CRIPPLING BLOW TO MY ESSENTIALLY ABORTIVE CAREER.
I JUST WANTED TO MAKE A POINT ABOUT HOW FUNNY IT IS THAT WE'RE FAR RUDER TO PEOPLE IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY THAN TO PEOPLE IN OUR OWN LIVES WHO WE GENUINELY DISLIKE!
I MEAN, WHO TAKES THE TIME TO BE PAINFULLY RUDE TO FAMILY OR CO-WORKERS?
*OH, I'M JUST FIBBING

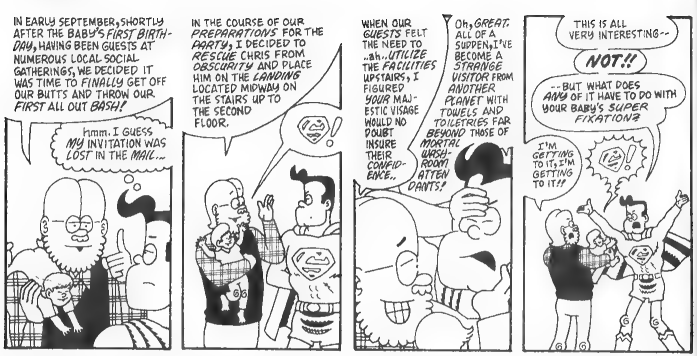
ALSO, WHAT I'M SAYING IS THAT I PREFER UNSOLICITED GIFTS TO UNRELENTING ABUSE,
LIKE A NORMAL HUMAN BEING.
BYE.
FOOF.
THE END

DATELINE: @?#!

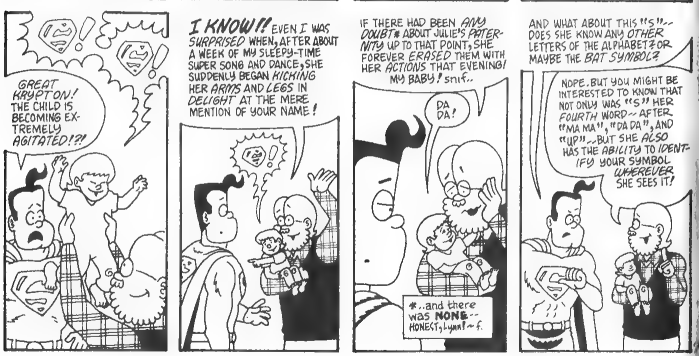

..HE SHOULD BE HERE ANYTIME NOW, JULIE..
YOU KNOW--
FROM ANOTHER PLANET, MUSCLES MADE OF GRANITE
LOOK! OFF PANEL! IS IT A BIRD? IS IT A PLANE?
Nah. WE KNOW WHO IT IS, DON'T WE, KIDDO? IT'S--
SUPERMAN, my BABY, and ME! by FRED HEMBECK, A TRUE STORY!
GREETINGS, FRED. IT'S A PLEASURE TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
THAT'S RIGHT, "S"!
THE FEELING'S MUTUAL, BIG GUY.
AND THIS LITTLE ONE -- SHE'S THE REASON YOU REQUESTED THIS MEETING.

SUPERMAN, MEET JULIE ELIZABETH MOSS HEMBECK, BORN AUGUST 25TH, 1990, SHE'S ALREADY ONE OF YOUR BIGGEST FANS-- FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING, OF COURSE.
PLEASED TO MAKE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE, JULIE.
HEMBECK, HAVE YOU BEEN BRAINWASHING THIS POOR CHILD? WHILE I APPRECIATE THE DEDICTION YOU'VE SHOWN TO ME OVER THE YEARS, YOU'RE AN ADULT (IF ONLY TECHNICALLY), WHILE THIS LITTLE CUTIE IS AN INNOCENT, UNFORMED CHILD--!
NO, NO, NO-- IT'S NOT LIKE THAT AT ALL. I WAS AS AMAZED AS YOU ARE WHEN I REALIZED MY 1-YEAR-OLD HAD CHOSEN YOU AS HER FAVORITE ICON, NOT THE SESAME STREET AND DISNEY GANGS.
REALLY? YOU HAD NO INFLUENCE ON HER?
OKAY, SO MAYBE I CULTIVATED HER INTEREST ONCE SHE INDICATED HER LEANINGS, BUT SHE HONESTLY FOUND YOU WITHOUT MY HELP. REALLY.
FRED, I'VE BEEN TO YOUR HOUSE. SOMETIMES I THINK I HAVE LESS TROPHIES IN MY FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE! MAYBE YOU'D JUST BETTER EXPLAIN THIS MIRACLE CONVERSION...
WELL, I SUPPOSE IT ALL BEGAN ON MY BIRTHDAY LAST JANUARY. A GOOD BUDDY* GAVE ME A LIFE SIZE CARDBOARD STAND UP FIGURE OF ONE OF YOUR SURROGATES--
* Kerry Austin, INNER EXTRAORDINAIRE, LOCAL RESIDENT AND VALUED FRIEND.


--CHRISTOPHER REEVE, THE FELLOW WHO PLAYED YOU IN THOSE MOVIES?
YES, I'VE SEEN THEM ALL-- THOUGH I SHOULD'VE SAVED MY MONEY ON THE LAST FEW..
SO YOU'RE SAYING THAT YOUR DAUGHTER'S ADORATION OF MY BIG RED S BEGAN UPON RECEIPT OF THIS EXTREMELY TASTEFUL AND ELEGANT BIRTHDAY GIFT?..
NOT EXACTLY. THE FIRST REACTION IT PROVOKED WAS MY WIFE'S SCORN.
LYNN AND I HAVE BEEN MARRIED OVER A DOZEN YEARS NOW, AND I REALLY DIDN'T THINK I COULD FAZE HER ANYMORE, BUT I GUESS DECORATING THE LIVING ROOM WITH A BRIGHT RED AND BLUE 6 FOOT SUPERHERO WAS MORE THAN SHE EXPECTED FROM ME.
WHAT WAS HER PROBLEM? DID I CLASH WITH THE DRAPES??
HA. GOOD ONE.
ANYWAY, AFTER THE REQUISITE COUPLE OF MONTHS, I PUT CHRIS UPSTAIRS IN THE ROOM THAT HOUSES MY COMIC BOOK COLLECTION, MUCH TO LYNN'S RELIEF, AND THAT'S WHERE HE STAYED, UNTIL--
UNTIL?..
1.


IN EARLY SEPTEMBER, SHORTLY AFTER THE BABY'S FIRST BIRTHDAY, HAVING BEEN GUESTS AT NUMEROUS LOCAL SOCIAL GATHERINGS, WE DECIDED IT WAS TIME TO FINALLY GET OFF OUR BUTTS AND THROW OUR FIRST ALL OUT BASH!
hmm. I GUESS MY INVITATION WAS LOST IN THE MAIL...
IN THE COURSE OF OUR PREPARATIONS FOR THE PARTY, I DECIDED TO RESCUE CHRIS FROM OBSCURITY AND PLACE HIM ON THE CANAPÉS LOCATED MIDWAY ON THE STAIRS UP TO THE SECOND FLOOR.
WHEN OUR GUESTS FELT THE NEED TO ..ah..UTILIZE THE FACILITIES UPSTAIRS, I FIGURED YOUR MAJESTIC VISAGE WOULD NO DOUBT INSURE THEIR CONFIDENCE..
Oh, GREAT. ALL OF A SUDDEN, I'VE BECOME A STRANGE VISITOR FROM ANOTHER PLANET WITH TOWELS AND TOILETRIES FAR BEYOND THOSE OF MOSTLY WASHROOM ATTENDANTS!
THIS IS ALL VERY INTERESTING--
NOT!!
--BUT WHAT DOES ANY OF IT HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR BABY'S SUPER FIXATION?
I'M GETTING TO IT, I'M GETTING TO IT!!

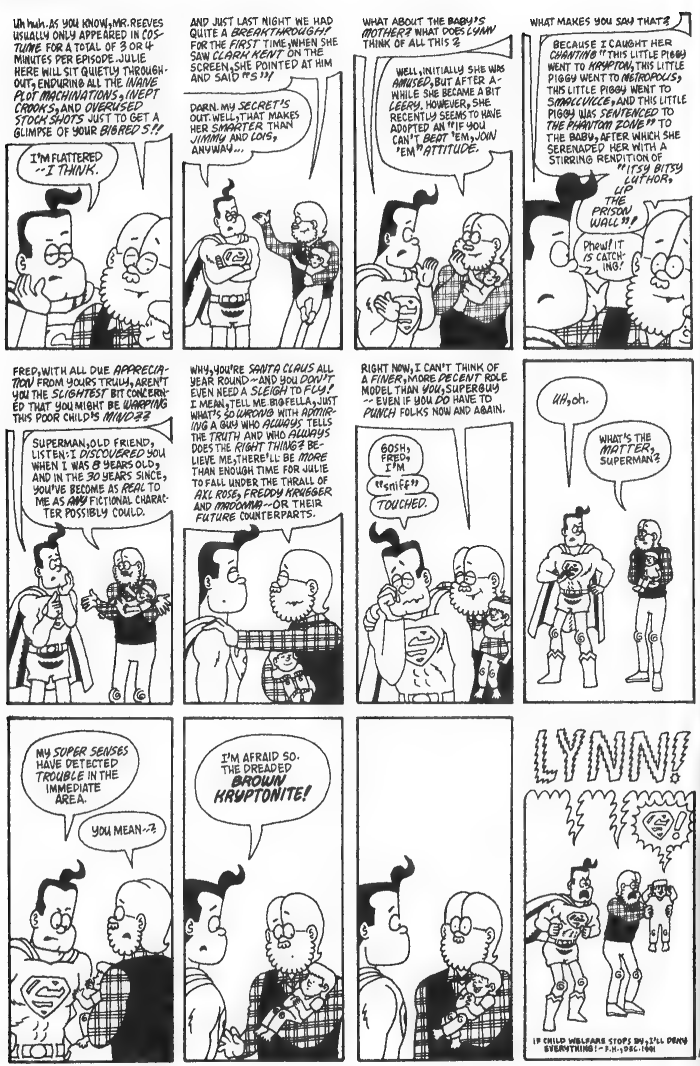
PROCRASTINATION! BEING MY MIDDLE NAME, I LEFT MR. REEVE'S LIFE-SIZE LIKENESS WHERE I'D PUT IT, AND, IN THE EVENINGS FOLLOWING THE PARTY, AS LYNN AND I PREPARED TO TAKE JULIE UPSTAIRS TO HER CRIB FOR THE NIGHT, I WOULD TELL HER-- SOMEWHAT DRAMATICALLY, I'LL ADMIT--THAT WE WERE GOING UP TO SEE SUPERMAN!
I DID ALL THIS INNOCENTLY, MIND YOU. I ADMIT, IT WAS MAINLY FOR MY OWN ENTERTAINMENT THAT I REPEATED THIS LITTLE RIFF TO THE KID, BUT THEN I HAD THE REAL INSPIRATION: I DECIDED TO EMBELLISH THINGS A BIT BY SINGING THE SUPERMAN SONG TO HER--
eh?
"SUPERMAN SONG"? WHAT "SUPERMAN SONG"??
IT WAS ON ONE OF THOSE GOLDEN RECORDS FOR CHILDREN I HAD AS A KID BACK IN THE EARLY SIXTIES. I THINK MITCH MILLER AND THE SANDPIPERS HAD A HAND IN PRODUCING THE MUSIC.
ANYWAY, I WENT SOMETHING LIKE THIS:
FROM ANOTHER PLANET-- MUSCLES MADE OF GRANITE, X-RAY EYES AND SUPER BRAIN! IS IT A BIRD?? NO!! IS IT A PLANE? NO!! WHAT IS IT? (Pa da DA) IT'S SUE-OO-OO-OOOP-ER MAN!


GREAT KRYPTON! THE CHILD IS BECOMING EXTREMELY AGITATED!?!
I KNOW!! EVEN I WAS SURPRISED WHEN, AFTER ABOUT A WEEK OF MY SLEEPY-TIME SUPER SONG AND DANCE, SHE SUDDENLY BEGAN KICKING HER ARMS AND LEGS IN DELIGHT AT THE MERE MENTION OF YOUR NAME!
IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY DOUBT ABOUT JULIE'S PATERNITY UP TO THAT POINT, SHE FOREVER ERASED THEM WITH HER ACTIONS THAT EVENING!
MY BABY! snif..
PA DA!
*..and there was NONE-- HONEST, Lynn!~ f.
AND WHAT ABOUT THIS "S"-- DOES SHE KNOW ANY OTHER LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET? OR MAYBE THE BAT SYMBOL?
NOPE. BUT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED TO KNOW THAT NOT ONLY WAS "S" HER FOURTH WORD-- AFTER "MA MA", "PA DA", AND "UP"!--BUT SHE ALSO HAS THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY YOUR SYMBOL WHEREVER SHE SEES IT!

REALLY? YUP. SHE HAS A SMALL PILE OF YOUR COMIC BOOKS-- DUPLICATE COPIES, OF COURSE--THAT I ALLOW HER TO PLAY WITH. SHE'LL SIT THERE, EMBLESSLY TURNING THE PAGES, PUTTING HER TINY LITTLE FINGER ON EACH DRAWING OF YOUR CHEST, PROUDLY PROCLAIMING OUT LOUD "S"!
Sigh..IT DOES MY HEART PROUD TO KNOW I'M TEACHING HER POOR ERLY.
AND THAT'S NOT ALL. JULIE RECOGNIZES YOU ON POSTERS, PEANUT BUTTER JARS, PRETZEL TINS, AND BIG FURRY STUFFED BEARS!
"BIG FURRY STUFFED BEARS"?
Uh huh. I TOOK MY GRAPHITTI DESIGN SUPERMAN T-SHIRT AND PUT IT ON ONE OF HER STUFFED ANIMALS, AND YOU KNOW WHAT SHE DOES? NOW? SHE LIKES TO CRAWL OVER TO IT, SAY "S"!, AND THEN BURY HER HEAD IN ITS CHEST!
Gee, FRED, DON'T YOU THINK MAYBE--
AND THEN THERE'S THE LITTLE PLASTIC PVC FIGURINE OF YOU THAT SHE PLAYS WITH. IN FACT, AT THANKSGIVING, HER GRANDMOTHER WAS AMAZED WHEN THE BABY, AT MY REQUEST, MADE SUPERMAN FLY BY HOLDING THE TOY IN HER HAND AND FLAILING HER ARM SIDE TO SIDE!

"AMAZED"? THE POOR WOMAN WAS PROBABLY AGHAST!
"MAKE ME FLY--"? WAIT A MINUTE--ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME A BABY CAN LEARN A CONCEPT LIKE FLYING FROM A COMIC BOOK? OR A CARDBOARD CUT OUT??
Uh uh. TV.
CHRIS AGAIN?
GEORGE.
PERHAPS THE ICING ON THIS PARTICULAR CAKE CAME THE WEEKEND THE CABLE CHANNEL WOR-TV MADE INAUGURATED THEIR RUN OF THE CLASSIC 1950s GEORGE REEVES SHOW WITH A SUPERMAN MARATHON. JULIE SEEMED AMAZED AND DELIGHTED TO FIND OUT THAT YOU COULD WALK, YOU COULD TALK, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, WHEN THAT BOMBASTIC THEME MUSIC PLAYED, YOU COULD FLY! COOL!

WHEN I SAW HER EXUBERANT REACTION TO THE PROGRAM--AS WELL AS THE SUPERIOR QUALITY OF THE PRINTS OF THE COLOR EPISODES--I REALIZED IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO RE-TAPE THE ENTIRE RUN, REPLACING THE INFERIOR COPIES I HAD MADE PREVIOUSLY. FOR THE BABY, OF COURSE.
OF COURSE.
SHE SAYS "S" EVERY TIME SHE SEES YOU, AND EVEN WHEN SHE DOESN'T.
PARDON ME?
A FEW NIGHTS BACK, LYNN WAS BATHING JULIE IN THE KITCHEN SINK, AS ALWAYS--DON'T WORRY, I'D ALREADY DONE THE DISHES--WELL OUT OF SIGHT OF THE TELEVISION, WHILE I WAS TAPING AN EPISODE FOR FUTURE VIEWING BY ME AND THE BABY.
WHEN GEORGE FLEW ACROSS THE SCREEN AND THE FAMILIAR THEME PLAYED, WHAT DO I HEAR FROM THE KITCHEN BUT A TINY LITTLE VOICE REPEATING "S"! "S"!?
REALLY, FRED, AREN'T YOU AT ALL WOR--
YESSIR, THAT'S MY DAUGHTER!
AND SHE'S LEARNED THE VALUE OF PATIENCE FROM WATCHING THOSE SHOWS!
"PATIENCE"??

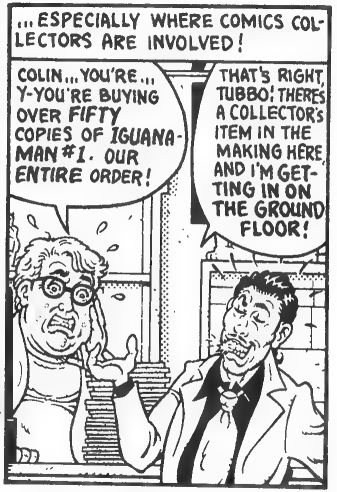

Uh huh. AS YOU KNOW, MR. REEVES USUALLY ONLY APPEARED IN COSTUME FOR A TOTAL OF 3 OR 4 MINUTES PER EPISODE. JULIE HERE WILL SIT QUIETLY THROUGHOUT, ENDURING ALL THE INANE PLOT MACHINATIONS, INEPT CROOKS, AND OVERUSED STOCK SHOTS JUST TO GET A GLIMPSE OF YOUR BIBRED'S?!
I'M FLATTERED --I THINK.
AND JUST LAST NIGHT WE HAD QUITE A BREAKTHROUGH! FOR THE FIRST TIME, WHEN SHE SAW CLARK KENT ON THE SCREEN, SHE POINTED AT HIM AND SAID "S"!!
DARN. MY SECRET'S OUT. WELL, THAT MAKES HER SMARTER THAN JIMMY AND LOIS, ANYWAY...
WHAT ABOUT THE BABY'S MOTHER? WHAT DOES LYNN THINK OF ALL THIS?
WELL, INITIALLY SHE WAS AMUSED, BUT AFTER A-WHILE SHE BECAME A BIT LEERY, HOWEVER, SHE RECENTLY SEEMS TO HAVE ADOPTED AN "IF YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM, JOIN 'EM" ATTITUDE.
WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?
BECAUSE I CAUGHT HER CHANTING "THIS LITTLE PIGGY WENT TO KRYPTON, THIS LITTLE PIGGY WENT TO METROPOLIS, THIS LITTLE PIGGY WENT TO SMALLVILLE, AND THIS LITTLE PIGGY WAS SENTENCED TO THE PHANTOM ZONE!" TO THE BABY, AFTER WHICH SHE SERENADED HER WITH A STIRRING RENDITION OF "ITSY BITSY LUTHOR, UP THE PRISON WALL"!
PHEW! IT IS CATCHING.
FRED, WITH ALL DUE APPRECIATION FROM YOURS TRULY, AREN'T YOU THE SLIGHTEST BIT CONCERNED THAT YOU MIGHT BE WARPING THIS POOR CHILD'S MIND??
SUPERMAN, OLD FRIEND, LISTEN: I DISCOVERED YOU WHEN I WAS 8 YEARS OLD, AND IN THE 30 YEARS SINCE, YOU'VE BECOME AS REAL TO ME AS ANY FICTIONAL CHARACTER POSSIBLY COULD.
WHY, YOU'RE SANTA CLAUS ALL YEAR ROUND -- AND YOU DON'T EVEN NEED A SLEIGH TO FLY! I MEAN, TELL ME BIGFELLA, JUST WHAT'S SO WRONG WITH ADMIRING A GUY WHO ALWAYS TELLS THE TRUTH AND WHO ALWAYS DOES THE RIGHT THING? BELIEVE ME, THERE'LL BE MORE THAN ENOUGH TIME FOR JULIE TO FALL UNDER THE THRALL OF AXL ROSE, FREDDY KRUEGER AND MADONNA -- OR THEIR FUTURE COUNTERPARTS.
RIGHT NOW, I CAN'T THINK OF A FINER, MORE DECENT ROLE MODEL THAN YOU, SUPERGUY -- EVEN IF YOU DO HAVE TO PUNCH FOLKS NOW AND AGAIN.
GOSH, FRED, I'M "sniff" TOUCHED.
UH, oh.
WHAT'S THE MATTER, SUPERMAN?
MY SUPER SENSES HAVE DETECTED TROUBLE IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA.
YOU MEAN -?
I'M AFRAID SO. THE DREADED BROWN KRYPTONITE!
LYNN!
IF CHILD WELFARE STOPS BY, I'LL DENY EVERYTHING! - P.H., DEC. 1991

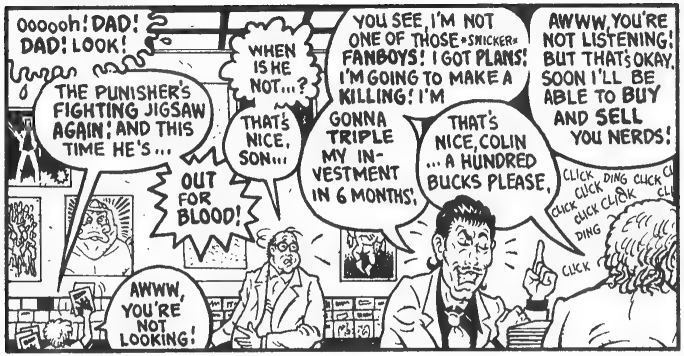
TALES FROM THE GALL

SCRIPT: ADAM-TROY CASTRO ART: CHAS GILLEN

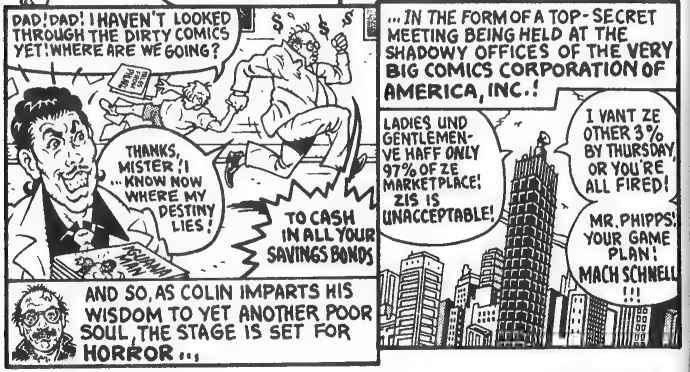
GREETINGS, BOYS AND GHOULS! 'TIS I, YOUR HOST... THE GALL-BLADDER... HERE TO RAISE YOUR GOOSE-BUMPS WITH ANOTHER TALE OF... THE UNEXPECTED!
TONIGHT'S TALE IS THE MOST HAIR-RAISING THING SINCE MINOXODIL! TOO BAD IT ARRIVED TOO LATE FOR ME! HEE HEE HEE!!!
ROBERTA GREGORY
ANDY MANGELS
TERI WOOD
KIM THOMPSON
TOM HARRINGTON
DAVE STROM
THIS ONE'S SO SPECIAL YOU MAY WANT TO DOUBLE-BAG IT... WITH BODY BAGS! HEE HEE HEE!
IT'S A TALE OF GREED, AND OBSESSION, AND JUST DESSERTS WE CALL...
"THE COLLECTOR!"

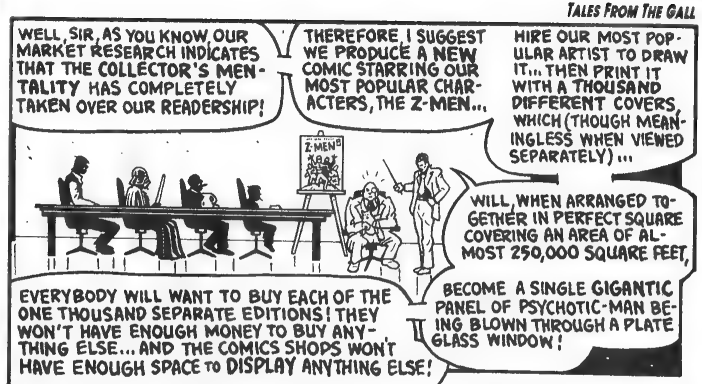
THE SCENE: YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD COMICS SHOP! NOT EXACTLY THE SORT OF PLACE YOU'D EXPECT TO FIND HORROR BEYOND IMAGINING! BUT LOOKS CAN BE DECEIVING...
2ND COMICS
GASP! GOOD LORD! *Choke*!
SUPER BUDDY


...ESPECIALLY WHERE COMICS COLLECTORS ARE INVOLVED!
COLIN... YOU'RE... Y-YOU'RE BUYING OVER FIFTY COPIES OF IGUANA-MAN #1. OUR ENTIRE ORDER!
THAT'S RIGHT, TUBBO! THERE'S A COLLECTOR'S ITEM IN THE MAKING HERE, AND I'M GETTING IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR!


Oooooh! DAD! DAD! LOOK!
THE PUNISHER'S FIGHTING JIGSAW AGAIN! AND THIS TIME HE'S...
OUT FOR BLOOD!
AWWW, YOU'RE NOT LOOKING!
WHEN IS HE NOT...?
THAT'S NICE, SON...
YOU SEE, I'M NOT ONE OF THOSE *SNICKER* FANBOYS! I GOT PLANS! I'M GOING TO MAKE A KILLING! I'M GONNA TRIPLE MY INVESTMENT IN 6 MONTHS!
THAT'S NICE, COLIN ... A HUNDRED BUCKS PLEASE,
AWWW, YOU'RE NOT LISTENING! BUT THAT'S OKAY, SOON I'LL BE ABLE TO BUY AND SELL YOU NERDS!
CLICK DING CLICK CLICK CLICK CLICK CLACK DING CLICK

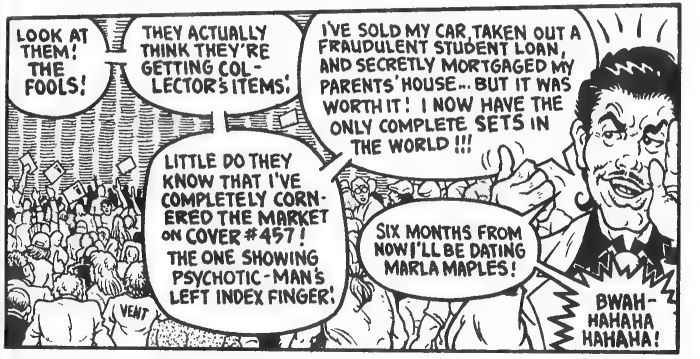
OH GAWD! DAD! LOOKIT THESE HOOTERS ON SPIDERMAN'S WIFE!
THAT'S NICE, SON...
EXCUSE ME, MISTER. I COULDN'T HELP OVERHEARING WHAT YOU WERE SAYING ABOUT... COMICS AS AN INVESTMENT? COULD THAT POSSIBLY BE TRUE?
TRUE!?! TRUE!?! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, MISTER? HAVEN'T YOU READ HARLAN ELLISON'S PLAYBOY ARTICLE?
WELL... uh... ACTUALLY I HAVEN'T READ COMICS SINCE THEY COST A PENNY... AND I'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF THIS ELLISON WOMAN...
WELL, TAKE IT FROM ME, FRIEND! BUY A DOZEN COPIES OF EVERY HOT NEW COMIC THAT HITS THE STANDS, WAIT SIX MONTHS, AND THEN SELL THEM! YOU'LL HAVE MORE MONEY THAN YOU CAN SHAKE A STICK AT!
DAD! DAD! GALACTUS IS BACK!


DAD! DAD! I HAVEN'T LOOKED THROUGH THE DIRTY COMICS YET! WHERE ARE WE GOING?
THANKS, MISTER! I ... KNOW NOW WHERE MY DESTINY LIES!
TO CASH IN ALL YOUR SAVINGS BONDS
AND SO, AS COLIN IMPARTS HIS WISDOM TO YET ANOTHER POOR SOUL, THE STAGE IS SET FOR HORROR...
... IN THE FORM OF A TOP-SECRET MEETING BEING HELD AT THE SHADOWY OFFICES OF THE VERY BIG COMICS CORPORATION OF AMERICA, INC.!
LADIES UND GENTLEMENVE HAFF ONLY 97% OF ZE MARKETPLACE! ZIS IS UNACCEPTABLE!
I VANT ZE OTHER 3% BY THURSDAY, OR YOU'RE ALL FIRED!
MR. PHIPPS! YOUR GAME PLAN! MACH SCHNELL !!!

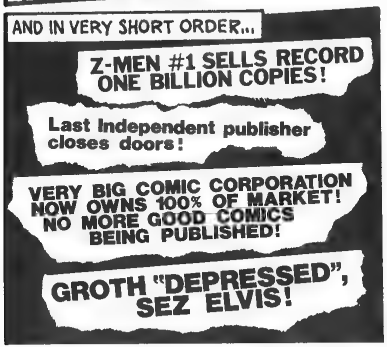

WELL, SIR, AS YOU KNOW, OUR MARKET RESEARCH INDICATES THAT THE COLLECTOR'S MENTALITY HAS COMPLETELY TAKEN OVER OUR READERSHIP!
THEREFORE, I SUGGEST WE PRODUCE A NEW COMIC STARRING OUR MOST POPULAR CHARACTERS, THE Z-MEN...
HIRE OUR MOST POPULAR ARTIST TO DRAW IT... THEN PRINT IT WITH A THOUSAND DIFFERENT COVERS, WHICH (THOUGH MEANINGLESS WHEN VIEWED SEPARATELY) ...
Z-MEN
WILL, WHEN ARRANGED TOGETHER IN PERFECT SQUARE COVERING AN AREA OF ALMOST 250,000 SQUARE FEET,
EVERYBODY WILL WANT TO BUY EACH OF THE ONE THOUSAND SEPARATE EDITIONS! THEY WON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY ANYTHING ELSE... AND THE COMICS SHOPS WON'T HAVE ENOUGH SPACE TO DISPLAY ANYTHING ELSE!
BECOME A SINGLE GIGANTIC PANEL OF PSYCHOTIC-MAN BEING BLOWN THROUGH A PLATE GLASS WINDOW!

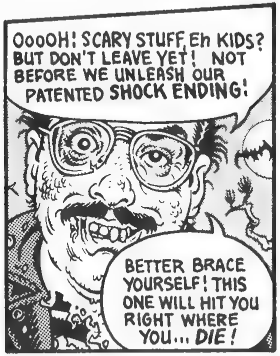
AN EXCELLENT PLAN, MR. PHIPPS. I'LL LET YOU LIVE ... ZIS TIME!

AND AS THE VERY BIG COMICS CORPORATION'S EVIL MARKETING PLAN GOES INTO EFFECT...
GASP! GOOD LORD! *Choke*!
Aieeeee!!!
WE RAN OUT OF MYLAR BAGS!
SUPER BUDDY
DAD! DAD! I FOUND A CONTINUITY ERROR IN IRON MAN!

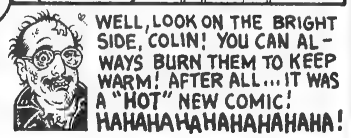

LOOK AT THEM! THE FOOLS!
THEY ACTUALLY THINK THEY'RE GETTING COLLECTOR'S ITEMS!
I'VE SOLD MY CAR, TAKEN OUT A FRAUDULENT STUDENT LOAN, AND SECRETLY MORTGAGED MY PARENTS' HOUSE... BUT IT WAS WORTH IT! I NOW HAVE THE ONLY COMPLETE SETS IN THE WORLD !!!
LITTLE DO THEY KNOW THAT I'VE COMPLETELY CORNERED THE MARKET ON COVER #457! THE ONE SHOWING PSYCHOTIC-MAN'S LEFT INDEX FINGER!
SIX MONTHS FROM NOW I'LL BE DATING MARLA MAPLES!
BWAH-HAHAHA HAHAHA!
VENT

AND AS THE Z-MEN CRAZE REACHES ITS PEAK...
DO YOU THINK YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DISPLAY OUR COMICS SOMEWHERE?
SORRY; Z-MEN #1 IS GOING INTO A FIFTIETH PRINTING AND I NEED THE ROOM! CALL ME NEXT APRIL AND I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO!
HEH HEH HEH EVERYTHING IS GOING PRECISELY TO PLAN!
WAHHH! MY DAD DROVE HOME WITHOUT ME!!!
Z-MEN


AND IN VERY SHORT ORDER...
Z-MEN #1 SELLS RECORD ONE BILLION COPIES!
Last Independent publisher closes doors!
VERY BIG COMIC CORPORATION NOW OWNS 100% OF MARKET! NO MORE GOOD COMICS BEING PUBLISHED!
GROTH "DEPRESSED", SEZ ELVIS!


OOOOH! SCARY STUFF Eh KIDS? BUT DON'T LEAVE YET! NOT BEFORE WE UNLEASH OUR PATENTED SHOCK ENDING!
BETTER BRACE YOURSELF! THIS ONE WILL HIT YOU RIGHT WHERE YOU... DIE!

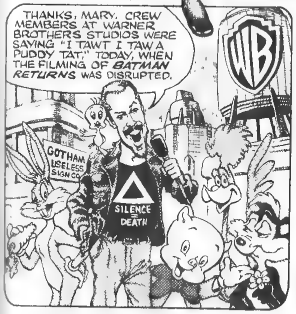
HERE IT IS! THE ONLY COMPLETE SET OF Z-MEN #1 ON THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT! THE MOST VALUABLE COMIC BOOK EVER PUBLISHED--- AND I GOT IT!
MINT CONDITION, TOO!
I HAD TO SELL ALL MY OTHER COMICS, AND HOCK EVERYTHING I OWNED... BUT NOW I'M GONNA BRING THEM BACK TO THE COMICS SHOP--- AND MAKE THOSE GEEKS PAY THROUGH THE NOSE!!


WELL, LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, COLIN! YOU CAN ALWAYS BURN THEM TO KEEP WARM! AFTER ALL... IT WAS A "HOT" NEW COMIC!
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!

andy mangels BACKSTAGE

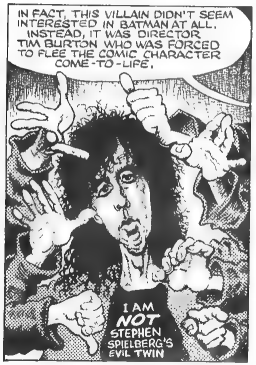
...JUST TOO, TOO, TERRIBLY EXCITING. WE'LL ALL BE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING WHETHER OR NOT MS. NIELSEN CAN REMOVE THE GREEN BODY PAINT, OR WHETHER SHE'LL BE DYE-CAST IN THE SHE-HULK ROLE FOR GOOD.
INSURED FOR $1,000,000
EVERGREEN
MEANWHILE, IN OTHER SUPER-NEWS...

...HOLLYWOOD WAS ROCKED BY A "CATFIGHT AT THE WARNER CORRAL," DURING THE FILMING OF THE SOON-TO-BE-CLASSIC, BATMAN RETURNS.
BRINGING US THE TREMENDOUSLY THRILLING STORY IS OUR "BACKSTAGE" REPORTER, ANDY MANGELS.
CAT FIGHT AT THE WARNER CORRAL

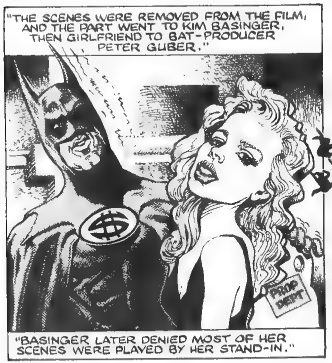

THANKS, MARY. CREW MEMBERS AT WARNER BROTHERS STUDIOS WERE SAYING "I TAWT A PUDDY TAT." TODAY, WHEN THE FILMING OF BATMAN RETURNS WAS DISRUPTED.
GOTHAM USELESS SIGN CO.
SILENCE = DEATH

HERE, ON THE ULTRA-SECRET STREETS OF GOTHAM CITY, ONE OF THE CAPED CRUSADER'S VILLAINS MADE A SURPRISE APPEARANCE.
GOTHAM TAXI
SILENCE = DEATH
HAHAHAHA
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!

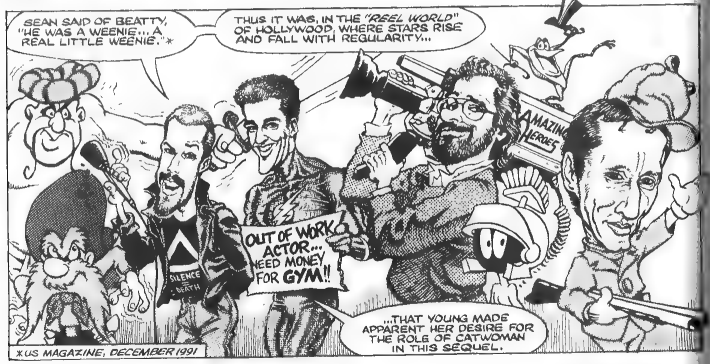
IT WASN'T STAR DANNY DEVITO, HERE SEEN AS THE PENGUIN, READYING TO FILM A CHASE SCENE IN HIS "PENGUINMOBILE."
'HAM TAXI
STUNT MAN
AUTOGRAPHS


IN FACT, THIS VILLAIN DIDN'T SEEM INTERESTED IN BATMAN AT ALL. INSTEAD, IT WAS DIRECTOR TIM BURTON WHO WAS FORCED TO FLEE THE COMIC CHARACTER COME-TO-LIFE.
I AM NOT STEPHEN SPIELBERG'S EVIL TWIN

AS IN THE MAJORITY OF CRIMES, THE FELINE WHO GAVE BURTON FURBALLS WAS NOT AN UNKNOWN TO HIM.
STAR SEAN YOUNG HAS BEEN SEEN AS THE SEXY-BUT-COLD REPLICANT IN BLADERUNNER...
...AS WELL AS KEVIN COSTNER'S CO-STAR IN NO WAY OUT AND A PLAYER IN A KISS BEFORE DYING.
"YOUNG HAD BEEN CAST IN THE ROLE OF VICKI VALE IN THE FIRST BATMAN FILM, BUT LOST THE PART WHEN SHE BROKE HER COLLARBONE FALLING FROM A HORSE WHILE PRACTICING HER RIDING SCENES."


"THE SCENES WERE REMOVED FROM THE FILM, AND THE PART WENT TO KIM BASINGER, THEN GIRLFRIEND TO BAT-PRODUCER PETER GUBER."
PROP DEPT.
"BASINGER LATER DENIED MOST OF HER SCENES WERE PLAYED BY HER STAND-IN."

CRUNCH
IT'S A PISTOL IN MY POCKET! I SWEAR!
"YOUNG WAS LATER CAST AS DICK TRACY'S GIRLFRIEND BUT LOST THE PART WHEN, ACCORDING TO INSIDERS, SHE DIDN'T RESPOND TO WARREN BEATTY'S AMOROUS ADVANCES."


SEAN SAID OF BEATTY, "HE WAS A WEENIE... A REAL LITTLE WEENIE."*
THUS IT WAS, IN THE "REEL WORLD" OF HOLLYWOOD, WHERE STARS RISE AND FALL WITH REGULARITY...
AMAZING HEROES
OUT OF WORK ACTOR... NEED MONEY FOR GYM!!
SILENCE OF THE NORTH
...THAT YOUNG MADE APPARENT HER DESIRE FOR THE ROLE OF CATWOMAN IN THIS SEQUEL.
*US MAGAZINE, DECEMBER 1991

"YOUNG ARRIVED AT THE WARNER BROTHERS STUDIOS EARLIER, DRESSED TO HER NINE LIVES AS THE FELINE FELON. LAST YEAR, SHE HAD ANNOUNCED TO THE BRITISH PRESS THAT..."
BOBCAT
LION
CHEETAH
PUDDEM UP! PUDDEM UP!
"...I'M GOING TO PLAY CATWOMAN ...I GET TO WEAR TIGHT THINGS AND STILETTO HEELS AND GO 'WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA,' LIKE THAT..."*
*SPEAKEASY #109

"BUT YOUNG WASN'T THE ONLY CONTENDER FOR THE ROLE. OTHERS INCLUDED..."
...THE TATTOOED SONGSTRESS, CHER...
...THE TRUE-BLUED SONGSTRESS, MADONNA...
...ELLEN BARKIN...
...AND LENA OLIN!
...MELANIE GRIFFITH...
...PAST PIN-UP RAQUEL WELCH...
THUFFERIN' THUCKATASH! I COULD DO THE PART IF I GET THPAYED!

WARREN, BRING ME MY MEOW MIX.
AND DON'T FORGET THE PICKLES!
"THE PART WENT TO ANNETTE BENING WHO, UPON BECOMING PREGNANT WITH WARREN BEATTY'S CHILD, DROPPED OUT OF FILMING."
"HEARING THE PART WAS AVAILABLE, YOUNG DEMANDED TO SEE TIM BURTON. THE CHILDLIKE DIRECTOR IS RUMORED TO HAVE BEEN HIDING IN HIS BATHROOM."
THIS IS NOT STEPHEN SPIELBERG'S EVIL TWIN'S TOILET!

"YOUNG COULDN'T FIND BURTON, AND SECURITY GUARDS WERE ALARMED WHEN SHE REACHED UNDER HER CAPE IN ANGER, PULLING OUT..."
GET DOWN!
SHE'S GOT A GUN!
DRAMATIC RE-ENACTMENT

"SHE APPEARED ON THE JOAN RIVERS SHOW THAT AFTERNOON, SHOWING HOME MOVIES OF HERSELF AS CATWOMAN."
"JOAN HERSELF SAT ON A BED OF KITTY LITTER DURING THE INTERVIEW."

"ARSENIO HALL WELCOMED HER TO HIS SHOW AS WELL, BUT DIDN'T CATER TO HER CATTINESS."
DO WE HAVE TO TALK ABOUT THIS CATWOMAN STUFF AGAIN? MY GOOD PAL EDDIE MURPHY AND I ARE SO TIRED OF IT.
WHOOP WHOOP WHOOP WHOOP WHOOP
SEAN HAS JOINED US HERE IN HER LATEST BID FOR A ROLE AS...
MARY JANE WATSON IN JAMES CAMERON'S UP-COMING SPIDER-MAN MOVIE. I WAS BORN TO PLAY THIS PART.
DON'T YOU AGREE!
FASHIONS BY McFARLANE'S OF HOLLYWOOD
WELL, I...EEEEEAAGHH!!
I DESERVE THIS ROLE!
KKUUULLKKILL
ZEEP ZEEP KWONK
YEEEE!

YOU...YOU SHOT SEAN YOUNG!
NAW. SHE WASN'T A REAL PERSON. SHE WAS A REPLICANT. PROBABLY A DRAG QUEEN, TOO!
HEY, AREN'T YOU DANNY BONADUCE?
YEP, BUT I THINK I'M JUST RIGHT FOR THE DECKER ROLE IN BLADERUNNER 2.
I DESERVE THIS... CLICK
WELL, MARY, A STRANGE TURN OF EVENTS IN THIS STORY. MORE NEWS SOON.
CALL ME AT THIS NUMBER. I NEED WORK!
555-H.I.R.E.
I MUST SAY THAT THIS IS ALL JUST TOO, TOO TERRIBLY EXCITING. WE'LL ALL BE LOOKING FORWARD TO...
ANDY MANGELS SCREENWRITER ©1992
BRIANI BUNIAK PHOTOGRAPHY

A Few Words With LARRY MARDER

Loosely adapted from an interview by Jeffrey Lang

Now that I've read all of ***Tales of the Beanworld****, I know why initiates are so excited about it. I use that word, initiate, very carefully. A reader has to be willing to invest a certain amount of time in the process.*

That's true. I'm asking the reader to *work*.

When you originally sat down to do ***Beanworld****, you must have known that by asking your reader to make this investment in time, it meant that your readership was always going to be a selective group. What do you expect the reader to bring to this process? Say someone picks up issue 13?*

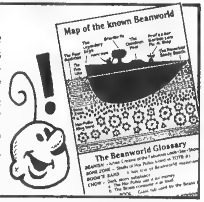
I don't know what people bring to the book. This is a problem that I've stopped worrying about. That's why I have a map & a glossary. I hope that when someone sits down and reads it for the first time, they say:

I THINK THERE IS SOMETHING HERE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, BUT ITS INTERESTING AND I'D LIKE TO READ MORE BEANWORLD.

I think if I can do that, I've really accomplished something. I think how old a reader is has a lot to do with it too.

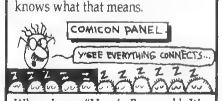
How so?

Little kids like to look at the surface stuff. They like the cute characters running around. They think *"I can track everything on this map and if I don't know who some of the characters are I can look it up in the glossary."* Kids miss the adult references to things outside of their experience, but they make out of it what they want and if it clicks, it clicks.



For uninitiated, describe **Beanworld.**

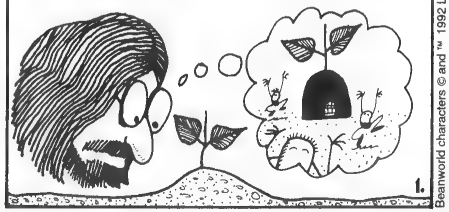
I've found that other people are better at explaining what *Beanworld* is about than I am. *Ha! Ha!* I usually say it's a story about a small tribe of beans that believe that they live in the center of their universe, their perfect world, and about how they maintain themselves in their food chain. At this point, people are snoring. cat yronwode often says it's an ecological romance but nobody knows what that means.



When I say, "Here's *Beanworld*. It's unlike any other comic book you've ever read," I sense cynicism from people. Why not? Marvel makes that claim for every new incarnation of the same old mutant books.

I got the idea for *Beanworld* in the summer of 1975. I was living in Connecticut and it was the one and only time in my adult life that I grew a vegetable garden. I had already been drawing beans for a few years so I wanted to pay close attention to these beans that I was growing. At first we carefully cultivated and pampered this garden but then lost interest in it because there was too much stuff coming from it.

Then I watched the whole thing overgrow and I was fascinated. The bean plants, as they got larger and larger, finally collapsed under their own weight and that seemed to be the perfect metaphor for bureaucracies, civilizations, everything. That's where I got the idea for a Beanworld, something that would start out very simple, would get very complicated and collapse under its own weight.



Beanworld characters © and ™ 1992 Larry Marder

Let's go back to your comment that the beans have a perfect world.

They think so.

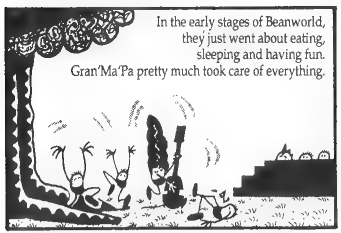
Yeah, that's what I wanted to ask you about. I felt you were putting ironic quotes around perfect.

Clearly, obviously it is not. As time has gone by, they've come to understand that things are out of balance and they're desperately trying to make some sense out of it. You have Mr. Spook who is essentially a reactionary saying:

Then you have Professor Garbanzo, who's a progressive saying:

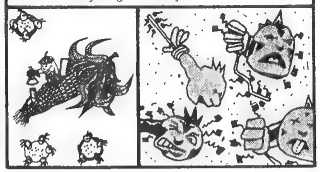
I THINK MYSTERY PODS ARE GOOD RAW MATERIALS.
THEY HAVE A PURPOSE. LET'S TURN THEM INTO WONDERFUL TOOLS!
LIKE THE FLOAT FACTOR

And there's Beanish who is caught up in all these secrets. He understands that Beanworld isn't the center of anything. Plus he has loyalties to a being who is clearly from another world.



In the early stages of Beanworld, they just went about eating, sleeping and having fun. Gran'Ma'Pa pretty much took care of everything.

Then in *Beanworld* #1 the Army of the Mirthful Mossy Mammoth slaughtered some of the Hoi-Polloi Ring Herd and everything went awry!



This was the beans first experience with an environmental imbalance resulting in both the Bone Zone and Too Much Chow.

They've been trying to get back on course ever since, but I think it's an impossible task because their population is expanding. The Pod'l'pool Cuties are five young beans that know nothing of the old way of life. They're growing up in a world where Mystery Pods are common, where Beanish disappearing each day at noon is normal. The Cuties are very different than the older generation and they're going to cause a lot of headaches for Mr. Spook and the rest of the tribe.

In the letters pages, you make several references to Marcel Duchamp. Who was he and what's his influence on the Beanworld?

Marcel Duchamp was born in France in 1887. His first success was as a cartoonist. He participated in the Cubist, Dadaist, and Surrealist movements.

2.

Nude Descending a Staircase—1912

Fountain—1917
(Drawing by Duchamp, 1964)

Duchamp's most famous painting is "Nude Descending a Staircase." He's also famous for having exhibited a urinal in a gallery, a form he called "readymades."

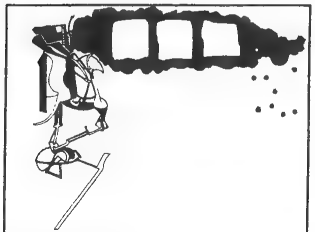
His most important painting was "The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even." It was painted on two big panes of window glass. Duchamp fans call it "The Large Glass." When you look at it you don't see anything. It looks like a mechanical drawing. Parts of it are done in very tight perspective. Other parts are just odd little squiggles that don't seem to be about anything at all.

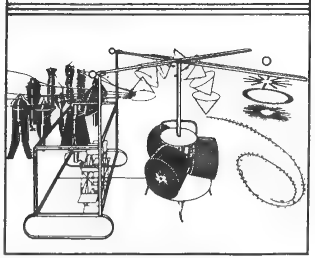
As it turns out it's a diagram for a universe that Duchamp dreamed up before World War One. It's almost a science fiction universe and it's like a story board.

If you understand what "The Large Glass" is supposed to be you can make all the mechanical parts move in your imagination.

You start at the left side of the bottom pane of glass and go around in a big counter-clockwise circle. It's fueled by "Love Gasoline" and he talks about meta-irony—well, I'm already talking in circles—*Ha! Ha!*

I've been studying his work for over 20 years and I always manage to find something new.





The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)—1915-23.

King—1920
(Chess piece design)

Queen—1920
(Chess piece design)

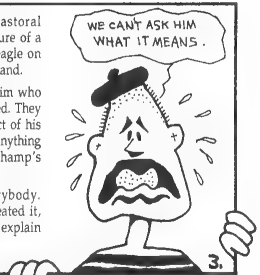
In 1923, he quit working on "The Large Glass," before it was finished. The only way to appreciate the depth of thought in "The Glass" is to study Duchamp's notes and diagrams.

The legend was that he quit being an artist to devote his life to chess and that was true, but *secretly* he made art for the rest of his life.

From 1946 to 1966, he clandestinely worked on something called "Given: 1. The Waterfall/ 2. The Illuminating Gas." It's in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. You look through a peephole in a wooden door and see a pastoral diorama with a life size sculpture of a blond, naked, woman spread-eagle on the grass holding a lamp in her hand.

Duchamp had people around him who hung onto every word he uttered. They were experts about every aspect of his work. Yet none of them knew anything about "Given" until after Duchamp's death in 1968.

He got the last laugh on everybody. First, nobody knew that he created it, and, second, he didn't have to explain any of it!



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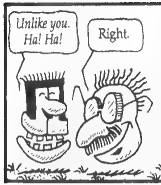


So that's who Duchamp was. Now to answer your other question: how is Duchamp an influence on me and the Beanworld?

First, I'm, trying to build a world that's similar to his world in its complexity. Duchamp's personal mythology was hidden in a cryptic painting, mine is in a direct sales comic book. Hopefully *I'll* live long enough and work fast enough to get it all done. But if I don't, if I get run over by a bus tomorrow, you can study *my* secret notes and journals and figure it all out.

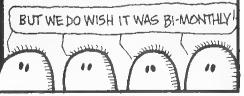
In 1923, Duchamp stopped being a professional artist. He realized that too much time is wasted in sucking up to gallery owners and high society art collectors.

He gave it up and got a day job. He always hung around with other artists, but no longer worried about showing in the gallery system.

This has been a great inspiration to me. I've always had a day job in the advertising or marketing business. I'm a seasoned journeyman in those trades. I am not a professional cartoonist. A pro jumps from job to job, character to character, book to book. I am a professional advertising and marketing guy. For the last 20 years I have jumped from client to client, product to product.

RESUME
I've created ads for Pesticides, Lampe, Health Care Products, Fine China, Rabies Vaccines, Wallpaper, Spray Paint and other products I am either hostile or indifferent to!
BSSST!

When it comes to creating comics, I have only one interest: *Beanworld*. It is my life's work. I do it when I can do it and I don't have to worry about whether it's making a lot of money or not. I don't have to sell out. I don't have to compromise my intentions in order to increase sales. I have my little cult of faithful fans who have stuck by me through boom and bust.



Is your readership fairly stable? Is it the same group of people that have been there since the beginning?

I believe so. No one seems to know much about how readership works. No comics creators, I mean *none*, have any idea of how the entire system works from top to bottom. Every one knows little pieces but not the Big•Big•Picture, to use a *Beanworld* phrase. I've been lucky that since 1984 I've been working behind the scenes of the business with publishers and distributors in an advertising and marketing capacity. I've learned a lot about how the direct sales system operates.

I think that many of the problems the industry has are the result of misconceptions, miscommunication and misinformation.

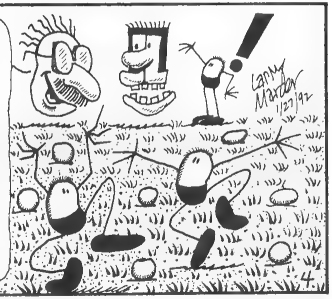
My wife, Cory, is a meeting planner for corporations, so she travels around the country a lot, and she goes into comics shops spot-checking how *Beanworld* is selling.

DO YOU HAVE A BLACK AND WHITE COMIC FROM ECLIPSE CALLED TALES OF THE BEANWORLD?
AW, LADY, DAT BOOK GOT CANCELLED TWO OR T'REE YEARS AGO.

Now, something is wrong with the system if this happens. Either the retailer is lying, doesn't know what he is talking about, or doesn't want to be bothered with handling a small book like *Tales of the Beanworld*.

That's one of the reasons why I took my current position of Marketing Director at Moondog's, the midwest's largest chain of comic book stores. What a great opportunity for a comics creator to observe the day to day workings of the direct sales system! I'm trying to locate the places in the system where information gets lost or misdirected. It has become quite apparent to me that even the most enlightened retailers don't begin to understand comic book creator's problems and vice versa. The people who create the comics and the people that sell them to the consumers rarely communicate directly to each other. Why is that ?

I'm trying to figure out ways to fix that. I don't know if I can come up with any solutions in one year or five years or ever, but I'm going to give it my best shot!



The End

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Okay, so you like *Amazing Heroes*. But it could be a little better. Just give us some feedback, we'll try our best to comply.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE COLUMN? check (✓) or number in order of preference

___Backstage	___Infernal Gall	___A Few Words	___The Cartoonist
___Silly Cover	___Strom's Index	___Cover Gallery	___Editorial
___Newsline	___Reviews	___Coming Distractions	___Amazing Readers
___Perspective			

WHAT KINDS OF FEATURES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF?

___Interviews	___Previews	___Publisher Profiles	___Ten of A Kind
___Hero Histories	___Essays	Other_____	

IS THERE A RECENT FEATURE YOU REALLY LIKED?_____

_____

IS THERE A PARTICULAR STORY/SUBJECT YOU'D LIKE TO SEE?_____

_____

HAVE YOU EVER DANCED WITH THE DEVIL IN THE PALE MOONLIGHT?_____

_____

WHAT'S THE *WORST* THING ABOUT AMAZING HEROES?_____

_____

ARE THERE OTHER FANZINES YOU LIKE? WHY?_____

_____

ANY OTHER COMMENTS?_____

_____

OKAY, WHAT FREE (NON-SWIMSUIT) ISSUE OF *AMAZING HEROES* WOULD YOU LIKE?

_____

ALTERNATE CHOICES

_____

_____

YOUR NAME/ADDRESS

_____

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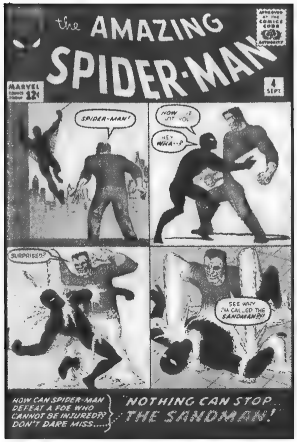
(Must be received by May 15, 1992. We reserve the right to give you an issue other than your choice.)

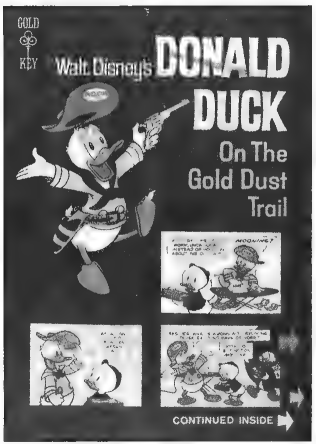
Don Rosa's COVER GALLERY

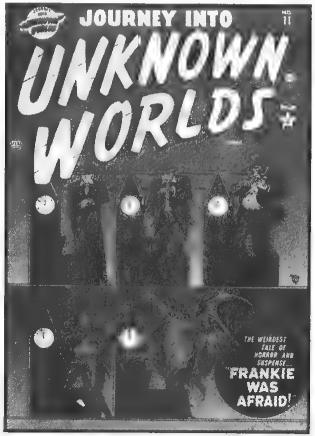
To go along with the theme of AH #200, here is an all-comic-strip cover gallery. These are funnybooks who just couldn't wait until their first page to start the festivities!

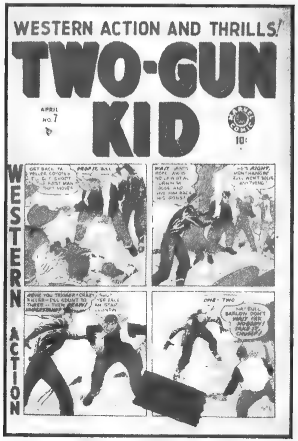
Everyone seems to remember the cover of *The Amazing Spider-Man* #4, so " 'nuff said" as Stan would 'nuff say. The sequence on the cover of *All American Western* #104 has Johnny Thunder expounding the Code of the West, or is it Philosophy of the West? (I think I recall studying Western Philosophy in college.) Next, an early issue of Dell's *Four Color Comic* (#7) offers potential buyers an entire free 7-panel gag to display the zany cartoon hijinx contained therein. *Donald Duck* #86 actually makes use of its front cover to contain the first 3 panels of that issue's story, an interesting concept—I'm glad they quit.

The second page of the gallery is an all-Atlas offering. First, *Journey into Unknown Worlds* #11 shows a guy turning into a vampire somewhat less attractive than Frank Langella. *Two-Gun Kid* #7 shows us that, long before Marvel made talky super-hero battles, they were making talky gunfights. And finally, two similar monster-era covers—*Strange Tales* #92 and *Tales to Astonish* #28. Note that the TTA cover seems to say that the featured story is contained COMPLETELY on the cover, "start to finish," and you thought some current comics were pointless and vapid!

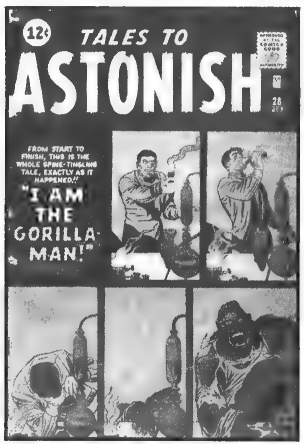

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
MARVEL
4
SPIDER-MAN!
HOW CAN SPIDER-MAN DEFEAT A FOE WHO CANNOT BE HURRED? DON'T DARE MISS.....
"NOTHING CAN STOP THE SANDMAN!"







STRANGE TALES
10¢
IT'S--MINE! HE KNOWS I'M HERE!
HE SEES ME!! OH-NO
HOW MUCH SUSPENSE CAN YOU BEAR???
DON'T DARE MISS...
"THE THING WAITS FOR ME!"
THE SHOCK ENDING WILL LEAVE YOU BREATHLESS!


12¢
TALES TO ASTONISH
FROM START TO FINISH, THIS IS THE WHOLE SPINE-TINGLING TALE, EXACTLY AS IT HAPPENED!!
"I AM THE GORILLA MAN!"

REviews

BATMAN & DRACULA: RED RAIN

Written by DOUG MOENCH; penciled by KELLEY JONES; inked by MALCOLM JONES III; edited by DENNY O'NEIL. Published by DC COMICS.

I have to admit I'm a sucker for hardcovers. (Shhh! Don't tell my dealer, I give him enough money as is.) They lend an air of credibility to the comics field to people who don't read comics; you can puff out your chest, point to your bookshelf, and exclaim—"I read comic books!" Most of the time you get good books, and every now and then you get something (like *Moonshadow*) that is a real treat and deserves its packaging. *Red Rain* is a toss-up. It is a good story, but I'm really not sure it is appropriate as a hardcover.

Dracula vs. Batman is a good premise, as Eric Lustbader writes in his introduction—"Gotham City seems ripe for the lord of vampires, doesn't it? The dark, grimy urban swamp has become a nightmare world so like many of our post-modern urban landscapes, inhabited by shambling *untermenschen*, seemingly irredeemably decayed." This is a natural pairing that I am quite surprised hasn't been done already.

The creative team is also well chosen; Doug Moench, while not my favorite author, has always held a special place in my heart for his work on *Lords of the Ultra Realm* and *Master of Kung-Fu*. Also, Kelley Jones is an excellent choice for a "horror" Batman book. His art style, while not always realistic, is always very stylish and moody, reminding me of Gene Colan back when he used to give a damn about his artwork. Also, his use of panels is vibrant and exciting, while the storytelling is smooth and flows well.

However, there are drawbacks with each. Moench, I felt, doen't quite have a firm grip on the Batman mythos. Some of the dialogue between Bruce & Alfred and Batman & Commissioner Gordon just didn't ring true and flow like it should. Kelley Jones, on the other hand, sometimes forgets his anatomy and elongates or just plain distorts characters. This can be forgiven, but what cannot is his portrayal of Alfred as a jowly, goonish fop. When doing "Elseworlds" books like this one, everything is subtly changed and the thing you need to anchor your story is solid characterization.

Preparing for *Operation Bat-Storm*—remember, folks, B-day is June 19th! Above: Kelley Jones & Malcom Jones's stylish Batman from *Red Rain*.

Surprisingly, hidden within the excellent story and artwork are relevant issues. Moench weaves in such problems as the homeless ("Yeah, but when he keeps hittin' on bums like this, who's countin'?"), acid rain (red rain stinging the eyes), racism (Gotham's first black mayor), the poor quality of news ("...pursuing the slimmer Elvis on Oprah"), and morality in which the difference between not only good and evil, but between humans and predators, is defined. Never once does he interrupt the flow of his story or get up on his soapbox to moralize. Hopefully, some of these very important points will sink in—at least subconsciously—and make people think.

So far, "Elseworlds" has been batting 1000. Let's hope they keep up the quality and provide us with the books that their packaging warrants and deserves.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ½ ***—Andrew Herington***

BATMAN: MASTER OF THE FUTURE

Written by BRIAN AUGUSTYN; illustrated by EDWARD BARRETO. Published by DC COMICS

We have seen the Victorian Batman before, obsessively stalking the murky footsteps of Jack the Ripper in *Gotham by Gaslight*. The premise was too good to forget.

Here he returns again, when the Master of the Future comes to the Gotham of 1892 to save the city from the befoulment of progress—on his own terms. "If I must destroy in order to teach, then I must," he explains philosophically. Therefore, Bruce Wayne must once again reluctantly take up the cape and cowl of the Bat-Man and fight for what he believes in.

This story has all the classic elements of basic comic book traditions—a hand-to-hand battle atop a roller coaster, a melodramatic villain, swordplay and secrets, disguises and explosions, mystery and deduction, and—slightly more out of the normal—a romance.

The twist is that they are all done with the aesthetic social style of the late nineteenth century. The idiom and the customs of our great-grandparent's time are transplanted to the Batman myth, so smoothly you hardly notice. The action-adventure formulae on which Batman is based all date back at least a century, to the visual symbolism of Bram Stoker or the worship of deduction of Conan Doyle. Take the high-tech modernisms out of a Batman story, and this is what is left—something very true to the essence of the theme of personal redemptions, obsessions, and responsibility for one's fellow man, themes which are as true to the spirit of the 1890's as the 1990's.

The characterizations of Batman, Commissioner Gordon and Alfred are not changed, except for their dress. Their motivations ring true for past or present. "The world needs a champion for a brutal new age," muses Bruce Wayne. "Someone prepared to deal with a rough future. Is that me?" No reader would doubt it.

The art is presented with a flair for detail and period costume, all meticulously rendered. It is presented with a good eye for action and particular power in the darker panels of a black-cowled Bat-Man stepping out of shadows. Faces are recognizable, the action easy to follow, and the pacing carefully mastered.

The novelty is in the use of the past; set in the present, this would be an average Batman story. Set in the past, it is injected with novelty and new meaning. It does what the best of historical fiction does: shows us the past in the recognizable light of the present.

If this quality can be maintained, I hope that we see more stories of the Bat-Man of 1890.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ★ ***—Elizabeth Holden***

WONDER MAN #7

Written by GERARD JONES; penciled by JEFF JOHNSON; inked by DAN PANOSIAN; edited by FABIAN NICIEZA. Published by MARVEL COMICS

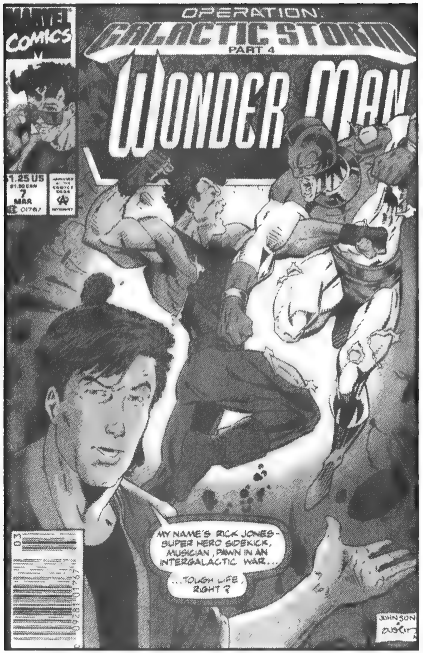
Often ignored in the discussion of the "grittier, more realistic" trend in super-heroes is the equally prominent trend towards super-hero titles with a humorous bent: *Excalibur*, the *Justice League*, and *Wonder Man*.

Wonder Man is written by Gerard Jones, who, to the disgust of such super-hero authorities as Sidney Mellon, prefers a light-hearted approach to the genre at times. In this case, it works.

Partially, it works because Wonder Man is kind of a laughable super-hero. Oh, he's a nice guy all right, and certainly of at least average intelligence, but his gimmick—and it's a good one—is that he was never really cut out to be a super-hero. Of course, anybody who's as powerful as Thor doesn't need much talent, but that only adds to the fun.

This issue, thankfully, takes the right kind of approach; it's humorous, not silly. Wonder Man has been appointed Rick Jones' bodyguard for the "Operation: Galactic Storm" that we've all heard so much about. A

Another of the "Elseworlds" series: *Batman: Master of the Future*, which takes place in the 1890s.



Kree warrior, however, has managed to get those Nega-bands of the original Captain Marvel (original *Marvel* Captain Marvel, anyway), and is using them to switch places with Rick.

Wonder Man is in a funny, but not exactly silly, quandry. Every time he tries to return one of the Kree's blows, the Kree switches places with Rick again. It passed two major credibility tests for me. First, given the conditions of the genre, it's a plausible tactic. Second, I was just as confused as Wondy during the fight. Wonder Man also has to use a little brainwork to get out of this, another big plus.

Unfortunately, it's just hard to feel strongly for a character like Wonder Man. As much as you can sympathize with an ordinary guy who's obligated to help save the universe now and then, nobody's blood will ever boil at the anticipation of his next adventure.

I also can't say much for the art team. It looks like a half-hearted attempt to emulate that ugly scribbly-stitchy rendering that Rob Liefeld brought into vogue. Real journeyman stuff.

Still, there is a niche for this kinder, gentler type of hero, and if *Wonder Man* isn't pushed out of the market by the sillier super-hero books, it might have a long life.

GRADE: ★ ★ ½ ***—Thomas Harrington***

SUBMISSIVE SUZANNE #1

Written and illustrated by GUENTHER VON WEGEN and KARL WEIERMAN; edited by RYDER WINDHAM. Published by EROS COMIX

I look upon some reviews as a public service; alerting people to comics that should be avoided or not missed. Unfortunately, *Submissive Suzanne #1* should definitely be overlooked.

Suzanne is being taken to Countess Aloya for discipline training by her new step-mother. What follows is bondage, sadism, lesbian sex, and nudity. I can't speak for anyone else, but none of this was very erotic to me; in fact, I found it pretty boring.

The art by Von Wegen and Weierman was unreal, especially in regards to the women's bodies, and it distracted from the already tedious storyline.

True, this is a very short review, but it doesn't take long to take out the trash.

GRADE: ★ ***—Kevin W. Hall***

MIRACLEMAN: APOCRYPHA #1

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by VALARIE JONES. Published by ECLIPSE COMICS

Like the biblical passages that it takes its name from, *Miracleman: Apocrypha* tells four tales of questionable authenticity from the title character's life. In a framing sequence by *MM*'s regular creative team of Neil Gaiman and Mark Buckingham, Miracleman peruses a trio of fictional accounts of his life, as well as one dealing with a young Johnny Bates (a.k.a. Kid Miracleman). All four stories are by writers and artists who have not worked on *Miracleman* before.

Alan Moore and Neil Gaiman, however, are two tough acts to follow, and, as is usual in any anthology, the results are mixed. "Miracleman and the Magic Monsters," by Steve Moore and Stan Woch, is an old style Marvelman (the character's original name) tale, a silly little tongue-in-cheek story with a dragon, an ogre, and a cyclops. Mickey Moran once again works for the Daily Bugle and exclaims "holy macaroni" when he is surprised.

One has to question the logic in writing a story like this when there are scads of old Marvelman comics that could have been reprinted instead. It was Moore's revisionist version of the character that made it a hot commodity. It is doubtful that *MM*'s regular readers will find anything for them in this story.

"The Rascal Prince" deals with an eleven-year-old Kid Miracleman during the '60s. Bates has not yet realized that his para-reality programming was pure fiction, and we are shown his delight at realizing the sadistic potential of using comic book super-powers on real people. It's a good, although fairly plotless, story by James Robinson and the delightfully creepy Kelley Jones.

In "The Scrapbook," by Sarah Byam and Norm Breyfogle, we find out what Mike Moran's life would have been like if Winter had been a normal child and Liz had stayed with him: boring.

"Limbo," written and drawn by *Grendel* creator Matt Wagner, is the last and best of the four. At the end of a hard day of playing God, Miracleman meets with Mors, keeper of the underworld beneath Olympus. The art is nothing short of terrific, from the cinematic arrangement of the panels, right down to the way Wagner draws the details of MM's costume with only color, no ink lines.

The book is a mixed bag, but it's worth picking up. Hopefully the second and third issues will be solid enough to carry us until Gaiman and Buckingham resume their work on the regular *Miracleman* title.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ***—Matthew Bradshaw***

JAGUAR #7

Written by WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS; pencilled by CHUCK WOJTKIEWICZ; inked by MIKE MANLEY and BRUCE N. SOLOTOFF; edited by JAMES OWSLEY. Published by DC COMICS

The plot of *Jaguar #7* is unadventurous. The Jaguar rescues a Japanese-American deputy from the bottom of a well—hence the title of the story.

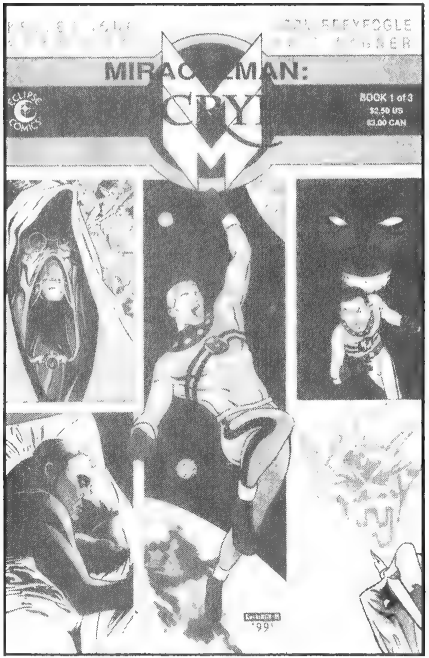
"Underground Dragon" opens with our heroine Maria Conception de Guzman, hiking in the woods near Elm Harbor University. The story provides the reader with a showcase of her powers. She is looking to explore the limits and strengths of her alter-ego, The Jaguar. There are several pages of her jumping vast distances, running at great speeds, and cuddling with a cute squirrel.

Unfortunately, I felt that the deputy existed solely to interject the dragon component of the story, and that perhaps it would have been much more effective had the Jaguar remembered something from her own Brazilian childhood. However, I did appreciate that the deputy was a woman (and obviously the more intelligent and competent of the police officers). I also like the fact that William Messner-Loebs uses a variety of characters with interesting names and ethnic backgrounds, such as "Zimo Whale," or a half Cherokee sheriff.

Chuck Wojtkiewicz, et al. are capable artists; the story is easy to follow (and the squirrel is really adorable). However, the art is rather two-dimensional and lacking in movement.

Still, it is wonderful to see the *Jaguar* women, who live in Michigan, wearing realistic outerwear during the winter, instead of Club MTV lycra spandex. Even Jaguar's *de rigeur* super-hero outfit can be forgiven, as it shows off her sturdy and muscular body which looks as if it is capable of the feats described by the writer.

Messner-Loebs describes the thoughts and feelings of the mousy Maria realistically and sensitively as she deals with the changes her newfound powers force upon her. She is indecisive when faced with the sheriff and deputy (obvious authority figures), insecure with the impression her physique and appearance have on them, and full of self-reproach for falling in the well herself, and possibly further injuring the Deputy.



I am looking forward to seeing the character of Jaguar/Maria developed. She has the potential to be one of the more interesting and memorable super-heroes. All in all, I would give *The Jaguar* five stars as a concept, but this particular issue...

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ***—Norah Hogoboom***

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION BATTLEMANIA #4

Written by JIM SHOOTER and LAURA HITCHCOCK; pencilled by STEVE DITKO and PAUL CREDDICK; inked by DON PERLIN and STAN DRAKE; edited by LAURA HITCHCOCK. Published by VALIANT

WWF Battlemania is *not* part of the integrated "Valiant Universe"—and for that we can be grateful.

Given that pro wrestlers are simply musclebound (over)actors, it strains our credulity to imagine them as engaging in "real life" adventures, but that, of course, is precisely what this magazine-size comic book is all about. It is particularly hard to take in the lead story, which features the Big Boss Man as a law enforcement agent attempting to stop the Undertaker from killing an innocent woman. Things are a bit more believable in the second (and thankfully final) story, as the Ultimate Warrior, aided by Rowdy Roddy Piper, attempts to prepare himself for an upcoming match with the Undertaker by imagining how he might truly defeat the bad guy's evil power.

But the scariest part of the magazine for me was the twelve-page catalog of WWF mechandise. Slippers with small plastic Hulk Hogan heads! A 22-inches-tall "soft and durable" Ultimate Warrior doll, "for ages 3+"! Arrgggghhhh!

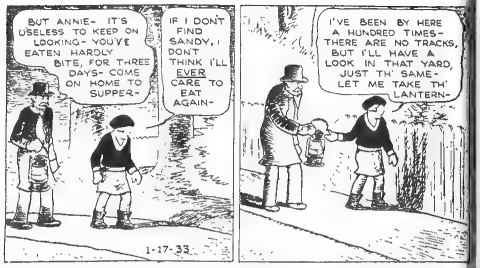
GRADE: ★ ***(Maybe*** ★ ½ ***or even*** ★ ★ ***if you actually like pro wrestling)*** ***—TM Maple***

THE COMPLETE LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE: 1933

Written and illustrated by HAROLD GRAY; Published by FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Another gap in the archives of classic newspaper comic strips has been filled in with this complete collection of the *Little Orphan Annie* strips for 1933. Condensed versions of the two stories in this volume were published in the Cupples & Leon albums of the 1930's (*#8 In Cosmic City*; *#9, Uncle Dan*). Now comic-strip fans and historians can read all 365 strips published during 1933, with the Sunday pages in the proper story sequence.

Harold Gray was one of the most popular and controversial creators in the history of the American "funny papers." As has been noted in the introductions to Fantagraphics' collections, readers appreciated that Gray knew how to tell a *story*, whatever they may have thought of his conservative politics. Gray's best adventures did not begin until later in the '30s; in 1933 he was still refining his art and writing variations on the Horatio Alger soap opera formula. But these stories are still enjoyable today for clever dialogue, human-interest plotting, suspense, and an authentic glimpse at the


BUT ANNIE- IT'S USELESS TO KEEP ON LOOKING- YOU'VE EATEN HARDLY BITE, FOR THREE DAYS- COME ON HOME TO SUPPER-
IF I DON'T FIND SANDY, I DON'T THINK I'LL EVER CARE TO EAT AGAIN-
I'VE BEEN BY HERE A HUNDRED TIMES- THERE ARE NO TRACKS, BUT I'LL HAVE A LOOK IN THAT YARD, JUST TH' SAME- LET ME TAKE TH' LANTERN-
1-17-33

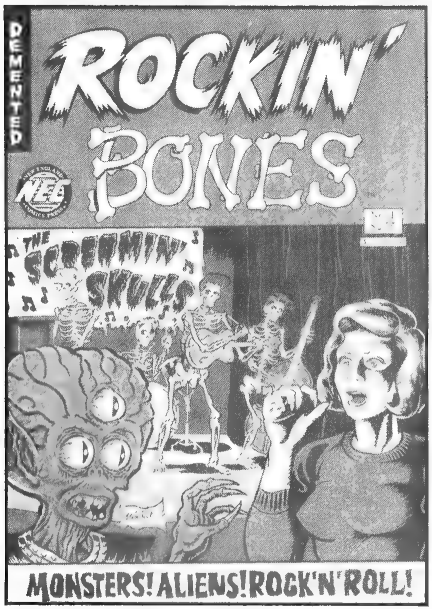
Harold Gray's *Little Orphan Annie*.

America of sixty years ago.

1933's strips are neatly divided into six-month-long adventures in which the feisty red-headed orphan and her dog, Sandy, are wandering through Depression-era America. As the year begins, Annie seems to have found a home with a kindly, elderly couple in the ambitiously-named small town of Cosmic City. But the town is run by its arrogant richest buisnessman, Phineas Pinchpenny, and when Annie gets in bad with his spoiled, trouble-making son Elmer Pinchpenny, things turn bad for her. Sandy is almost killed, and when Annie accidentally learns a secret that could ruin the Pinchpennys, they try to do away with her

In the second story, Annie moves on to a bigger city where she befriends a blind beggar, "Uncle Dan" Ballad, who plays a violin for pennies. Annie starts to sing along with his folk tunes, and soon people are tossing dollar bills into his hat. A show-business agent offers to get them into the vaudeville circuit where they can make real money. But Mr. Charles C. Chizzler is a crook who tricks them into signing a contract that gives him virtually all their earnings. This was one of Gray's earlier, more contrived stories, in which fate and divine justice, rather than Annie's own cleverness, result in Chizzler getting his deserved comeuppance. This tale wraps up at the Christmas season, just in time for a satisfyingly happy ending for purchasers of this 1933 collection.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ★ ***—Fred Patten***



ROCKIN' BONES #1

By DARREN MERINUK; edited by LARRY BOYD. Published by NEW ENGLAND COMICS

Like a lot of people these days, Darren Merinuk is immersed in '50s junk culture. *Rockin' Bones* is pretty much a loving tribute to teenage delinquents, rock & roll, radioactive monsters, and EC comics (but thankfully, no Betty Page).

His cartooning influences, however, are a little more eclectic. Though there are definite signs of EC weirdoes like Basil Wolverton and Bill Elder, there's a lot of modern weirdos like Charles Burns, Peter Bagge, and Dan Clowes.

Merinuk seems to hold a lot of real admiration for the above artists, and he seems intent enough on developing his own style for me not to consider him a rip-off artist. Unfortunately, it's sometimes hard to see what his own style is like under all this pop culture.

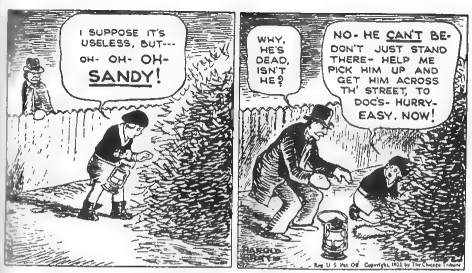
The issues starts off with "Maniacal Manor," a *Munsters/Addams Family* type comedy, with a would-be tenant being shocked on a house tour by the Maniacals. Familiar territory, yes, but he does keep the gags flowing fast. Grandpa orders a mail order bride from Mercury, Junior fights off a Martian invasion, and Sis and her gorilla boyfriend fight off the cops, all in five pages.

There's a number of EC tributes/parodies, my favorite of which is "Rocket Romance," a two page synthesis of the publisher's love and sci-fi genres. Bad '60s and '70s TV cartoons are the inspiration for "Big Ape in the Zombie Factory," in which Big Ape and his psychedelic rock band friends destroy a zombie factory and get chided by a cop because making zombies isn't against the law. The issue is rounded out by a couple of parodies warning kids against such antisocial behavior as listening to rock & roll and blowing up the world.

But the best part of the issue is the two-page centerspread in which ever-imaginable monsters of the pulps and B-movies invade a suburban street. Anybody who ever grew up in the suburbs probably wished they could be as fun as this.

I think Merinuk still needs to refine his style, but then, "refinement" is the last thing this magazine's target audience would want.

GRADE: ★ ★ ½ ***—Thomas Harrington***


I SUPPOSE IT'S USELESS, BUT--- OH- OH- OH- SANDY!
WHY, HE'S DEAD, ISN'T HE?
NO- HE CAN'T BE- DON'T JUST STAND THERE- HELP ME PICK HIM UP AND GET HIM ACROSS TH' STREET, TO DOCS- HURRY- EASY, NOW!
HAROLD GRAY
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1933, by The Chicago Tribune

BOOK REVIEW

COMIC BOOK HEROES OF THE SCREEN

Written by WILLIAM SCHOELL; Published by CAROL PUBLISHING GROUP.

You thought *Superman III* was the worst piece of trash you'd ever seen, didn't you? Well, you were wrong. The film which teamed Richard Pryor and Christopher Reeves was actually "a perfectly acceptable piece of entertaining, eye-dazzling fluff." Or so says William Schoell. You thought *The Last Crusade* was possibly the best of the Indiana Jones movies—certainly better than *Temple of Doom*, right? *BUZZ*. Wrong again! You see, "surprisingly little is spectacular or at least original about *Last Crusade*." Or so says Schoell again in his survey of films inspired by comics heroes.

The author of *Stay Out of the Shower: Twenty-Five Years of Shocker Films* is himself a bit of a shocker in his new book, *Comic Book Heroes of the Screen*. As he compares and contrasts the super-hero of print with his screen counterpart, Schoell delights in turning the conventional wisdom of fans and critics on its ear. Was Lewis Wilson, for example, poorly cast as Batman in the 1943 serial? The word from On High came down a big yes. But Schoell considers Wilson "very good and quite convincing," though "somewhat chunky." (In case you're interested, so do I. Nyaah!)

A forthright, engaging writer, Schoell makes you want to take a second look at such "forgettable" fare as *Supergirl* and—NO!—*Howard the Duck*. He also challenges you to re-evaluate critical and financial successes like *Star Wars* and *Batman*. Yet, Schoell is no mere curmudgeon, still less a sloppy thinker. He's a very good reviewer.

Which is both the strength and the weakness of his book. Although I enjoyed reading his opinions, I wanted more hard information. Basically, each chapter contains a brief history of the comic on which the film or films is based (with a few pungent comments on the comic itself) and a summary and review of the screen treatment. There are lots of photos—some in full-page color—but they're all publicity shots and stills. Where are the interviews, the script samples? Why, I learned more about the *Shazam* TV series in a half page of Andy Mangel's "Backstage" than in Schoell's entire chapter on Captain Marvel. The cursory inspection and secondary sources pull down an otherwise interesting work.

That's the trouble with being a fan. You just get too well informed. You always want *more*. But *Comic Book Heroes* should still make a nice gift for the dabbler in comics and films.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ***—Gary D. Robinson***

A poster for one of the '40s *Batman* serials, from *Comic Book Heroes of the Screen*.

FAVORITES

VIOLENT AMERICAN LOUTS

by Jeffrey Lang

LOUT RAMPAGE
Written, illustrated, and edited by DANIEL CLOWES. Published by FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

NEW AMERICAN SPLENDOR ANTHOLOGY
Written by HARVEY PEKAR; illustrated by VARIOUS; Published by FOUR WALLS EIGHT WINDOWS.

VIOLENT CASES
Written by NEIL GAIMAN; illustrated by DAVE McKEAN; Published by TUNDRA PUBLISHING.

I don't know if our esteemed editor, Tom Harrington, has ever explained this, but we *ask* to review the books that appear in these columns. He sends us a long list and we say, "I'll take this one and this one and this one." It's a lot like ordering Dim Sum—most of the time, you have a pretty good idea what you're getting, but every once in a while you see something on the menu that you don't recognize and the waiter can't explain. If you're feeling daring, you say, "What the hell," and go for it. I've gotten some good stuff that way and I've gotten some real crap. (It's true what they say about critics, by the way, we *do* think it's more fun to write pans than raves. There are so many great synonyms for "putrid.") However, none of these particular items were on the "What the hell" menu.

Daniel Clowes' *Lout Rampage* is a collection of short subjects, most of which originally appeared in the excellent *Blab* or the even more excellent *Eightball*. Clowes' characters scare me; they all sweat profusely, have strange hobbies and stick crustaceans in their eye sockets (one of the more bizarre images of 1991).

Clowes is one of the best cartoonists currently working and a keen observer, though he doesn't like most of what he sees. Clowes is pretty hard on the things he doesn't like (see "I Hate You Deeply"), and even on those he does (see "I Love You Tenderly"). The only thing that makes his misanthropy bearable is that he doesn't make any claims to being better than the rest of the world. In fact, when he turns that scathing eye inward (as in "Marooned on a Desert Island with People on the Subway" and "Just Another Day. . . ," the last word in autobiographical comics), he can be just as unflinchingly honest with himself as he is with everyone else.

Comparisons to films writer/director David (*Blue Velvet*) Lynch have been coming thick and fast these days, but he and Clowes truly are kindred spirits. Both are fascinated by freaks and eccentrics, but where Lynch sometimes comes across as manipulative and cynical, Clowes has genuinely strong feelings for fringes, partly, I suspect, because he knows he is one, too.

The only problem with *Lout Rampage* is that in it you're only seeing one part of Clowes' range. In *Eightball*, his angry, frantic grousing is balanced by the bizarre, and strangely sentimental *Like a Velvet Glove Cast in Iron*. If you like *Lout Rampage*, you're going to be a happy camper when the collected *Glove* comes out. Save room on your bookshelf.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ★ ½

Daniel Clowes' *Lout Rampage*.

Something strange has happened to Harvey Pekar's *American Splendor* over the past few years. Since Chester Brown, Seth, David Chelsea, and Joe Matt started doing autobiograpy, *A.S.* has become something of an institution, the standard to which the cutting edge is compared.

American Splendor is about the small victories and defeats of life, the lost-and-found eyeglasses, the anxiety-ridden midnight drives, the awkward conversations with people we think we know, and work. Pekar loves the minor chords, the downbeat and bluesy, and, like a jazz musician, he constantly monitors his mental landscapes, searching for the telling note, the descriptive phrase that characterizes the whole. Unfortunately, it also tends to make his stories cryptic, self-involved, and occasionally, flat. With all the noodling around on the same ground, Pekar produces a few sour notes, a few gems, and a lot of admirable craftsmanship. Nobody can drop in silent panels like Pekar.

For many readers, the highlight of the collection will be the strips describing his visits to *Late Night with David Letterman*, but I prefer the bits that give some insight into Pekar's past and his relationships with his wife and co-workers. My favorite strip was "Broken Window," a story about Pekar's father losing his temper when young Herschel heaves a rock through a garage door window. Unfortunately, "Festering," another story about an incident of violence in Pekar's younger days, showcases his most annoying trait; cutting away just before the climax. Sometimes, it seems to me that Pekar edits himself too carefully. He gets a case of the screaming Woody Allens and says, "No, this is too personal." It's Pekar's life, so he can show any part of it he wants, but sometimes I'd like to see something besides anxiety and belligerence.

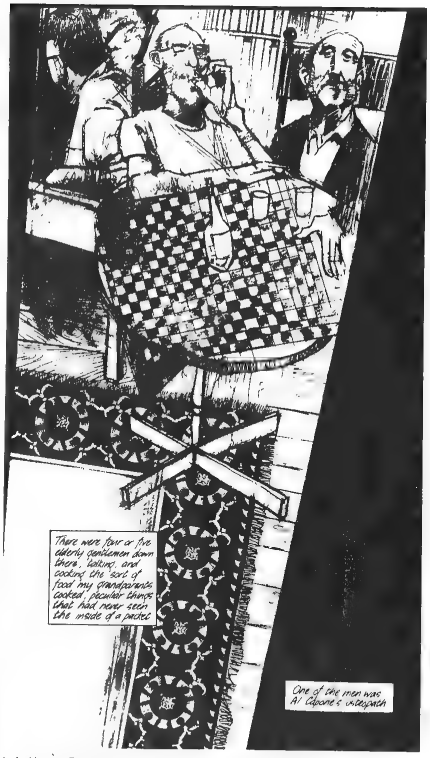
This is a huge collection, over 300 pages for $19.00, a real bargain, but beginners may want to start with more modestly sized *American Splendor* collection from Doubleday, which features a bunch of work by R. Crumb, Pekar's best collaborator. The art in this collection runs from fair to excellent, including work by regulars Val Mayerik, Frank Stack, Gary Dumm, and guest appearances by the likes of Chester Brown, Spain Rodriguez, Jim Woodring, Colin Upton, and Alan Moore.

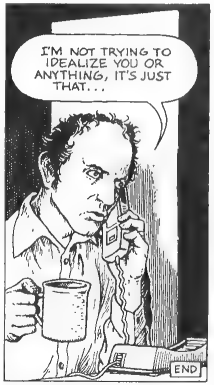
GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ★

When I learned how to write reviews, I was instructed to begin by making a general comment about the work, then state the positive and negative points, concentrating on the negative. That's very hard to do with this next piece, because, as hard as I look, I can't find anything I don't like.

Violent Cases is an autobiographical tale about, among other things, the reconstruction of memories, the inevitable betrayal of a child by his parents, the nature of violence, and the horrors of children's parties. These are the facts: when Neil Gaiman was four years old, his father accidentally dislocated his arm. Neil went to an osteopath for treatment and it turned out that the osteopath had treated Al Capone when Capone was at the height of his power. The osteopath told Neil stories about Capone and his associates and the wonderful, terrible parties they would throw.

A short time later, Neil attended a child's birthday party at the Queens' Hotel. A suspicious-looking magician began performing, and young Neil (who, rightfully, does not trust magicians) slipped away from the party, found a barroom down the way, and once again encountered the osteopath; they talked again. Somewhere in the middle of this, Neil relates an event that occurred when he was sixteen, an encounter with a Great Unexplainable. This well-orchestrated muddle of memory is about, as Gaiman states, the events that fall victim to "those bits of one's memory that simply do not work."


There were four or five elderly gentlemen down there, talking, and looking the sort of food my grandparents cooked, peculiar things that had never seen the inside of a pastry.
One of the men was Al Capone's interpreter.



Left: Harvey Pekar. Above: *Violent Cases*, now available in color.

Violent Cases is as seamless a piece of comic art as you're likely to see. It's really frustrating to read the introdution and discover that this is an early effort for both Gaiman and McKean. The text is, in turn, sly and poetical and though McKean's art bears some superficial resemblance to vintage Sienkiewicz, I think that McKean is a bit more subtle and restrained and knows how to pick a good angle. Though both Gaiman and McKean have gone on to do wilder, more imaginative things (*Sandman* and *Cages* are two outstanding examples), *Violent Cases* will always be, as Gaiman states in the introduction, "our first child, and it commands from both of us a love and loyalty that's all its own."

Tundra should be complimented for repackaging this work for American audiences.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

VALIANT

FROM STAN "THE MAN" TO JIM "THE HIM?"

by TM Maple

MAGNUS, ROBOT FIGHTER #10

Written by JIM SHOOTER and FRED PIERCE; pencilled by MARK MORETTI; inked by TOM RYDER and TED HALSTED; edited by D. DAVID PERLIN.

SOLAR, MAN OF THE ATOM #7

Written by JIM SHOOTER; pencilled by D. DAVID PERLIN; inked by STAN DRAKE; edited by BOB LAYTON.

X-O MANOWAR #1

Written by JIM SHOOTER and STEVE ENGLEHART; layouts by BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH; finishes by BOB LAYTON and JOHN HOLREDGE; edited by D. DAVID PERLIN.

RAI #1

Written by DAVID MICHELINIE; pencilled by JOE ST. PIERRE; inked by CHARLES BARNETT III; edited by D. DAVID PERLIN.

HARBINGER #2

Written by JIM SHOOTER; pencilled by DAVID LAPHAM; inked by JOHN DIXON; edited by JANET JACKSON.

All published by VALIANT, a division Voyager Communications Inc. (James Shooter President)

Jim Shooter is back. And he's armed —with a comic book company.

Starting from a base of a couple of old Gold Key characters, Shooter is busily building the "Valiant Universe," seemingly intended to show everyone that Marvel made a big mistake by letting him go. And make no mistake: Marvel is his target. If there was any doubt, his recent editorial made this clear. Just as the uncaring DC of the early '60s ("run by stuffy businessmen") was supplanted by the upstart Marvel, the front-running Marvel of the early '90s ("run by financial people") is challenged by Valiant, which is "owned and run by creative people."

In view of his track record at Marvel, some people will no doubt blanch at Jim Shooter portraying himself as totally on the side of the "creative people" (rather than of management). But then, this sort of fits in with the overall master plan: if Valiant is the new Marvel, then it seems clear that Shooter is the new Stan Lee (in a '90s kind of way, of course).

But the proof is (or should be, anyway) in the product, not in the hype, so let's see what Valiant is putting on the stands these days.

The "Valiant Universe" began with *Magnus Robot Fighter*, a revival of the well-regarded title published by Gold Key in the '60s. Naturally, as seems to be the case with all revivals now, this is a darker and grimmer version of the original. But in this case, it *should* be darker and grimmer. The original *Magnus* never quite followed through on its premise: a society that had become morally (and practically) weak because of its over-reliance on technology.

Since the new series began, Shooter has certainly put the city of North Am through the wringer, showing how fragile it had become. He did this through the advent of "freewill" (sentient) robots rather than by simply developing the inherent flaws in the city (though these were used to an extent), but it was still a welcome change of direction. This also entailed turning Magnus into a hunted outcast rather than the champion that he had previously been. Again, this is a cliche, but it is thematically correct.

In issue #10, we have the second part of a trilogy featuring one of Magnus' greatest enemies, Xyrkol, who had been brainwashed into becoming a law-abiding, but ineffectual, citizen. Now, North Am's war with the free-will robots has caused the leader of the city to restore Xyrkol to his malevolent genius and make a pact with him to destroy the robots and Magnus. Of course, Xyrkol then turns the tables in an attempt to gain ultimate power for himself.

Unfortunately, what started out as a promising series has degenerated, for the moment at least, into a rather predictable and formulaic storyline. Maybe the concluding part of the trilogy will redeem the first two-thirds and regain the previous level. (Points are also lost for the impractical and voyeuristic nature of Leeja's new costume.)

GRADE: ★ ★ ½

Just as *Magnus* forms the core of the "Valiant Universe" in A.D. 4001, another old Gold Key character is the basis of the present: "Doctor Solar" has been reborn as "Solar, Man of the Atom." By the now familiar device of a freak nuclear accident, Dr. Phillip Seleski was transformed into Solar, an incredibly powerful being with weird energy abilities. Well, actually, it's not that simple, as there are multiple versions of Solar/Seleski. Solar's origin is being told in six-page segments in the first ten issues, while the mysterious nature of his present (and future) situation is unfolding in the main storyline.

But for now, in the seventh issue, Solar is facing a deadly threat from an invading force of ruthless and numerous aliens. This is the most purely "super-heroic" storyline so far in this title, as the issue consists almost entirely of battle scenes.

It is disappointing that the focus has shifted from the intriguing matter of Solar/Selenski's nature and his attempt to adjust to his new situation. However, the alien invasion has been well-handled. Though a bit vaguely defined, its scale is impressive. Even more importantly, we (along with Solar) find out that it is not really that the aliens are ruthless, but that they have an entirely different moral and philosophical viewpoint than we do: in their eyes, we are just as immoral and destructive as we feel they are. Thus, the aliens become not just another soulless conquering army, but a challenge to our smug view of the universe and our place in it.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★

In *Solar #7*, he battled an alien wearing the "X-O armor;" this armor was also referenced in an earlier issue of *Magnus*. Now that armor takes center stage in *X-O Manowar*, which begins inside one of the ships in the alien fleet that Solar discovered. A man named Aric escapes from his alien captors and finds a set of the X-O armor. Donning it, he battles his way out of the ship and back to Earth. However, it is a strange Earth to him. Not only is he geographically out of place (he has landed in Peru, though he is of apparently northern European extraction), but he is out of place in time too, for he was seemingly snatched by the aliens during prehistoric times.

Aric adapts fairly well to these new circumstances, until the aliens come in search of the valuable armor. Then Aric's great hatred of them comes back to the surface and he embarks upon a crusade to battle them.

While there are some fairly intriguing notions in this story, one can't help but wonder if it is all in service of getting a hard-hitting barbarian into our modern world, of having a "techno-barbarian" participate in stronghearted mayhem in an urban setting, much as Conan strutted through his own long-lost era. And, of course, there's those pesky and numerous aliens to deal with.

Lots of possibilities here—both good and bad.

GRADE: ★ ★ ½

Rai first appeared in *Magnus*, beginning in his own stories (as one of the "flipbooks"—a *nice* gimmick) and then crossing over with Magnus himself. Now Rai has his own series, but it takes place in a much changed environment.

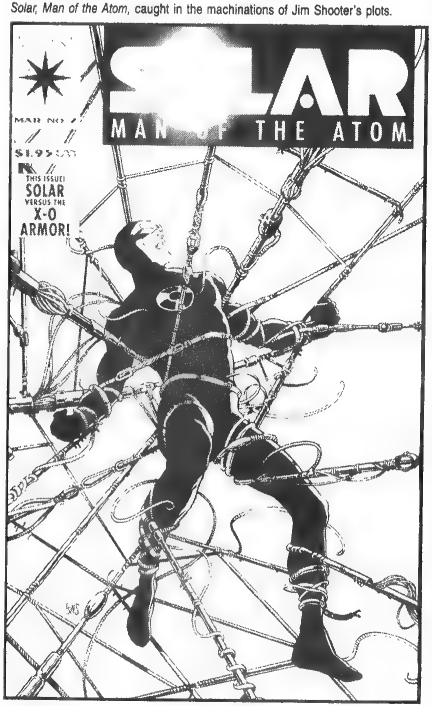
Rai was the "spirit guardian" of Japan, charged by Grandmother (the ruling computer of Japan) with protecting its fifty billion inhabitants. But an alien invasion (do I detect a trend here?) destroyed Grandmother's control and caused her to flee, while the self-contained habitat of Japan was sent into space, orbiting the Earth. Now the Humanists (anti-Grannies) are in control while the Restoration Underground (pro-Grannies) tries to bring back the old ways. Rai is caught in the middle, unsure of who (or how) he is meant to protect, and he is tortured by the fact that his estranged wife is now the chief protector (wearing X-O armor) of the Humanists.

In a way, Rai is another version of the Magnus idea. Japan was more reliant on its technology (though in a slightly different way) than North Am ever was, and now it too has been stripped away, forcing society to restructure itself. Unlike Magnus, who became a rebel, Rai has been rendered almost obsolete by these changes and must struggle to find his way.

Like *Magnus*, the early storyline in *Rai* holds out great promise; it remains to be seen if this promise will be fulfilled.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★

Solar, Man of the Atom, caught in the machinations of Jim Shooter's plots.



In an early issue of *Solar*, he encountered an organization named Harbinger, which advertised that it provided help for people with supernormal powers. But beneath its benevolent facade, Harbinger was an evil empire, devoted to conquest via the use of those super-normal individuals. Solar quickly got out of that situation.

But Harbinger is still around, very much a threat to society. But despite its title, *Harbinger* is not really about that organization (or, at least, not *only* about it), but rather about an as yet nameless group that is opposed to Harbinger.

Pete, a fellow with amazing mental and telekinetic powers, was almost entrapped by Harbinger before he realized its true nature. Now he is dedicated to defeating it, and to that end he has recruited four others to join him. Naturally, they are not a happy team, though the inevitable bickering is fairly well handled. So far, their battle against Harbinger is rather unfocused; they know that they don't like Harbinger, but they don't know quite what to do about it. In fact, most of their time had been spent evading Harbinger's attacks rather than actively harrassing Harbinger. All of this seems a perfectly natural way for events to develop.

Though the plotting has been fairly pedestrian, the characters here are handled in a fairly engaging way. Sure, the group contains not a few familiar stereotypes, but they interact in a suprisingly effective manner.

Valiant is big on gimmicks, and the gimmick here is coupons in the first six issues, which can be redeemed for the special *Harbinger #0* issue. I'm not sure I like the concept, but at least Valiant has learned from a similar gimmick with *Magnus*. Here, the coupons are rather plain, whereas in *Magnus* they were quite slick and also part of the strip of "trading cards" contained in each issue. (Though I must admit that the ridiculousness of that ploy was somewhat worth it to see the difficulties it caused for purists who agonized over whether or not to "de-mint their copies by cutting out the coupons.)

GRADE: ★ ★ ½

Valiant seems well on its way to firmly establishing itself in the comic book market. They are carefully building a series of closely interrelated super-hero oriented titles, which seems to be what a substantial portion of the audience wants. These titles offer super-heroes that are slightly different from the norm (and often with a sci-fi slant) in stories that are usually solidly done. Nothing deep or profound, of course, but generally good, competent storytelling.

MARVEL

GROO'S TENTH: "DID I ERA?"

by Jason Sacks

GROO THE WANDERER #85

Written & illustrated by SERGIO ARAGONES; twaddleized by MARK EVANIER; edited by MARCUS McLAURIN.

BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT COMIC BOOK #1 & 2

Written & pencilled by EVAN DORKIN; inked by STEPHEN DeSTEFANO; edited by FABIAN NICIEZA.

KID 'N' PLAY #1

Written by DWIGHT COYE; pencilled by CHUCK FRAZIER; inked by RON BOYD; edited by FABIAN NICIEZA.

TOMB OF DRACULA #1 & 2

Written by MARV WOLFMAN; pencilled by GENE COLAN; inked by AL WILLIAMSON; edited by TERRY KAVANAGH.

THE EVERYMAN

Written, illustrated & colored by MICHAEL D. ALLRED & BERNIE MIREAULT; edited by NELSON YOMTOV. Published by MARVEL/EPIC

Marvel has never been well known for its humor comics. However, humor has always been an element of Marvel's line, with *Not Brand Echh!* in the '60s, *Crazy* and *Howard the Duck* in the '70s, and *Groo*, among other series, in the '80s and '90s.

Sergio Aragones is celebrating his tenth anniversary of producing *Groo*. It's amazing that he hasn't lost a single step in all this time—Groo is still the stupidest man to have ever lived. He loves cheese dip, destroys whole cities, you know the list.

Groo #85, for instance, concerns two witches who make a deal with a king to make Groo disappear. Unfortunately, rather than destroy him, the witches' spell just turns Groo invisible. Even when invisible, Groo protects his loyal dog Rufferto's diamond collar, hurts a guy badly for calling him a mendicant, and destroys several armies.

This really shouldn't "work" as well as it does, according to the traditional rules. Aragones "should" be tired of his incredibly detailed two-page spreads. He "should" be having trouble coming up with new jams for Groo to get himself stuck in. And yet, the issue starts out with a typically spectacular double page spread that features sunken ships, burning houses, one-armed people, destroyed ox carts, and on and on. It ends (as usual) with Groo coming full circle and destroying another town. As usual, it's all hysterically funny. Aragones is now only second to *Cerebus*' Dave Sim in the amount of time he's spent constantly creating the same comic. Like Sim, Aragones creates a brilliant comic on a monthly basis. Both books are true classics.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

One cartoonist with the promise to be good as Aragones is Evan Dorkin. His *Bill & Ted's Excellent Comic Book* is the most hilarious new comic of the year (although I haven't read the issue of *Punisher* in which he becomes a black man.) Dorkin, who puts the dudes through their paces with the inking assistance of Stephen DeStefano, has created the most anarchistic, uproarious and yet warm comic of recent memory.

Usually when adapting movie characters to comic book form, a cartoonist is constrained in his treatment of the characters. They end up being fairly bland and colorless in comparison to their movie likenesses. This was the case with Marvel's *Star Wars* series, for instance.

Bill & Ted's, however, is even funnier than the two movies. Dorkin shows in these two issues that a comic can be even more anarchic than a movie. For instance, the first issue has Bill & Ted getting married to their medieval sweethearts, and the issue is wild. The wives' medieval suitors come to 1991 California in the time machine, but Bill & Ted's robot doubles take care of them. Lincoln, Socrates, Genghis Khan, Billy the Kid and all the other historical figures from the movies pop up and have hilarious bits. And Death steals the show. Death the party. . .um, higher spirit. . .gets wild and crazy and pisses everybody off at the wedding, and then quits his job. He's not quite the Grim Reaper here.

Bill & Ted's #2 is even more hysterical. It has dinosaurs (drawn in a Jack Kirby pastiche), zombies, slime creatures, Death in tacky tourist clothes, and much more. I'm surprised the panels don't burst from all the craziness crammed within them.

This is one crazy and fun comic.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ★

Evan & Stephen's *Bill & Ted.*

PLEASE - WE NEED TO FIND THE PHONE! WHERE C-UH?
SORRY, CURVISE DUDE - HE WAS HERE BUT HE'S VACATEFU FOR VACATION. WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, MAN?
DUNNO WOKE UP WITH NO HEAD!
BILL! CHECK IT OUT! BACK THERE! - IT'S MRS. SCHWINN! OUR OLD MATH TEACHER! DUDE! "CREEPY SCHWINN'S DEAD! NO TEST TODAY!"
I'VE BEEN G-CH.
HEY IT'S BILL AND TED! I THOUGHT I'D NEVER HAVE TO SEE THEM!

Another new Marvel comic adapted from a movie is *Kid 'n Play*. Unfortunately, it's as awful as *Bill & Ted* is great.

The first issue concerns Kid 'n Play, the stars of the *House Party* movies, joining "Grandmaster 'Dragonfoot' Gorger's Kung Fu, Karate, and Ninjutsu Dojo" club after they get beaten up and hung from a flagpole by a jealous boyfriend. I guess the joke here is supposed to be that Kid 'n Play are totally unathletic and that Grandmaster Gorger exhausts them and wacky antics ensue.

Well, the antics here are wacky—there's a ping pong ball gun and a danger room-type place that the Grandmaster uses to teach the guys how to fight—but the antics are lame and pointless.

Even if Dwight Coye's script had been decent, the art of Chuck Frazier and Ron Boyd still would have stunk the place up. Their style is full of chubby cheeks and silly postures. Unlike Aragones or Dorkin, Frazier and Boyd seem to think that absurdly exaggerated facial poses and goofy hair are all it takes to make a comic funny.

What makes this comic really awful, though, is that Kid 'n' Play are supposed to be black. Rather than not making anything major out of the fact (the *Cosby* method) or make it a minor but important plot element (as race was in the *House Party* movies), Coye makes the protagonists black just by throwing in a few lines in stereotypical black slang—"wussup" is in here far too often for my liking.

It's great to see black characters in comics. But this is Archie and Jughead in blackface. Please, Marvel, let Kid 'n' Play be really black.

GRADE: ★ ½

Now for a sudden switch from humor to horror. Horror comics have also been a significant segment of Marvel's line. In fact, in a way, the giant monster comics of the '50s were precursors to the much more serious horror appearing today. In the same way that giant ant movies eventually led to movies like *Alien*, so monster comics like "Bingabongaborn, the Really Big Monster That Ate Detroit!" has led to the much more sophisticated horror comics appearing now.

All of this is a long way of coming to Marvel's four-issue revival of its most beloved horror series, *Tomb of Dracula*. Featuring terrific characterization by Marv Wolfman and spectacularly spooky art by Gene Colan, the 70's *Tomb* is a cult classic (no pun intended). In this age of Clive Barker, Anne Rice, and Stephen King, bringing back the King of the Undead seemed to be a great idea. Putting the original Wolfman/Colan team on the book must have seemed a natural.

IT IS WORTH A VERY LARGE REWARD TO BE FREE OF GROO! IT IS WORTH TWO VERY LARGE REWARDS!
IN THAT CASE WE WANT TWO VERY LARGE REWARDS!

The fate of Sergio Aragones' *Groo* is discussed by his friends.

The first two issues aren't bad. The plot involves a cult leader bringing Drac back to life and Dracula coming to America. It's not the most original plotline, but Wolfman handles it with finesse. Some of the supporting characters, especially Frank Drake, are weak personalities, but Frank's whining doesn't detract too much from the book.

Gene Colan's art is, unfortunately, somewhat weak. In recent years, Colan, who has been illustrating horror comics since the last days of EC Comics in the 50's, has gotten sloppy. Colan, however, is still a master at making characters seem peaceful or horrific, and is one of the finest cartoonists around at conveying the weight of his characters. Colan people have mass. When they stand, they seem to have almost stepped out of real life and onto the comics page. However, too many of his characters seem to have chubby, round faces with dislocated jaws. And too many panels are sketchy and hard to decipher.

So *Tomb of Dracula* is an above average, not great, horror comic.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★

The Everyman is the newest feature of Marvel's Epic horror line, although the comic is more supernatural than horrific.

It concerns Emily Play, a benign witch raped and murdered in a small town, and her coming back for revenge in the body of an androgynous supernatural being of vengeance, the Everyman (although the being is never given that name in the story).

This sounds rather cliched in outline, but co-creators Dalton Allred and Bernie Mireault breathe fresh life into the plotline. For instance, rather than have Emily/Everyman kill her rapist and murderer in the book's climax, the protagonist listens to reason and saves her rapist's life out of respect for the beliefs of her earthbound lover. She subverts her most primal wish for vengeance out of wisdom and love. Pretty unique for a Marvel hero.

Allred and Mireault's art is gorgeous. Apparently, the two men painted animation cels to create the textured colors and vibrant linework here—it's a unique effect, and quite attractive.

The Everyman seems to be a pilot for what looks like a pretty good series. It has some plot holes and is occassionally a bit hard to follow. But the idea has promise. Let's hope Allred and Mireault get a chance to bring back their unique and compassionate spirit of vengeance.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ½

Finally, a word or two about Marvel increasing the prices of their mainline titles from $1.00 to $1.25. Marvel's lower sellers like *Captain America* and *Sleepwalker* might suffer, but as long as the House of Ideas keeps pumping out mutant books, the fans will keep buying them. But I still don't understand why *Groo* is going all the way from $1.00 to $2.25. For money, I guess.

DC

WARLORD: WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

by Alex Chun

SWAMP THING #118

Written by NANCY COLLINS; pencilled by SCOT EATON; inked by KIM DeMULDER.

WARLORD #1

Written by MIKE GRELL; pencilled by DAMEON WILLICH; inked by RICK HOBERG; edited by MIKE GOLD.

SHADO: SONG OF THE DRAGON #1

Written by MIKE GRELL; pencilled by MICHAEL DAVIS-LAWRENCE; inked by GRAY MORROW.

BATMAN/JUDGE DREDD: JUDGMENT ON GOTHAM

Written by ALAN GRANT and JOHN WAGNER; painted by SIMON BISLEY; edited by DENNY O'NEIL.

BATMAN VS. PREDATOR #1

Written by DAVE GIBBONS; pencilled by ANDY KUBERT; inked by ADAM KUBERT; edited by DIANA SCHUTZ and DENNY O'NEIL. Published by DC COMICS and DARK HORSE COMICS.

When I began choosing books for this column, it was quite refreshing to read some unfamiliar names on the credit pages. After reviewing nothing but Marvel books for the past six months and seeing the same old names (and the same old stories), the switch over to DC books was a most welcomed relief.

One of the things I've always liked about DC is that their editors are editors, whereas at Marvel more than a fair share of their writers are or were editors. The editors at DC seem more willing to take a chance on unproven talent, even on their high-profile books, and that tells me that they're smart enough to remember that the Neal Adamses and Frank Millers of comicdom had to start somewhere.

A good example of using unknown talent is *Swamp Thing* #118, which marks the debut of penciller Scott Eaton on the book. Eaton's credits include a few issues of *Doctor Fate*, and he's joined on the book by writer Nancy Collins, a horror novelist by trade.

As far as I'm concerned, one of the most difficult assignments in comics has to be making a pile of swamp scum interesting. In the past, *Swamp Thing* has been blessed with some exceptional writers and artists such as Alan Moore and Bernie Wrightson, and I believe that, given time, this new team will start its own tradition.

In the team's first story, titled "A Child's Garden," Collins deftly meshes the horrors of the real world with the mystical elements of the swamp. At one end of the spectrum, Alec is a father with all the concerns of a normal parent, but on the other end, he's also the Swamp Thing, whose daughter, Tefe, can turn a cat inside-out with just a thought.

But there is more. Along with parental fear, the story also deals with childhood innocence and impulsiveness. Collins explores these two childhood qualities and together they lead to the partial origin of Les Perdu (the monster from last year's *Swamp Thing* Annual) and the kidnapping of Tefe by a child molester.

Eaton adds to the story with his artwork, especially his rendition of Alec and the Parliament of Trees (whom Alec approaches for advice on how to deal with Tefe's powers). He also employs a nice mixture of layouts with varying perspectives, but his greatest strength lies in the expressiveness he gives to the creatures of the swamp.

Together, Collins and Eaton flesh out all the characters in *Swamp Thing*, and they have created a world where even piles of muck have feelings.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ½

Now, right after I've finished patting DC on the back, they had to go and resurrect a book that should have been left for dead. The book is Mike Grell's *Warlord*, and I call it Mike Grell's because he's the one who brought the book notoriety in its original incarnation. Well now it's back in a six-issue mini-series, and the only part of the first issue worth looking at is the cover by Grell.

Warlord #1 is a dud. I'm guessing that the series will be about an older Warlord, and that's based on the simple fact that a minstrel wanders into a tavern and manages to bump into one of the Warlord's former, and now much older, companions. The old man then tries to recap over 100 *Warlord* books in 15 pages; not only is this an impossible task, but a boring one as well. There's nothing in this first issue that makes me remotely want to pick up the rest of the series. No plot. No cliffhanger. Nada. Zip.

You just knew they'd hit it off, didn't you? (*Batman/Judge Dredd*)

The artwork by Dameon Willich and Rick Hoberg is uninspired, to say the least, with half the pages containing the Warlord posturing and looking a lot like a regal dwarf. Having read the entire original series, I can accurately say that only the cover and an ad for a *Warlord* trade paperback bears any resemblance to the *real* Warlord.

GRADE: ★ ½

While Grell isn't drawing much these days, he's certainly been busy at his word processor. Grell's second mini-series in as many months is the four-issue mini-series *Shado*, a spin-off from his very successful *The Longbow Hunters* mini-series.

Shado, as you may remember from the *LBH*, is the mysterious female archer who aided Oliver Queen against a cadre of drug smugglers. She is also, apparently unknown to Queen, the mother of their five-year-old child.

Also established in the *LBH*, Shado is tied to the Yakuza through her father, and her past resurfaces when a guilt-ridden WWII vet comes to her seeking the origin of a samurai sword. Shado attempts to trace the sword back to its rightful owner and delves into the long and confusing history of the Yakuza. A problem arises, however, when Shado discovers that the sword belongs to one of the strongest Yakuza leaders, and that returning it to him would give him the license to slash his way up to the top of the Japanese underworld.

As with most of Grell's work these days, the book exudes a strong feeling of realism, and the art by Michael Davis and Gray Morrow (a nice combination of the new with the old) contributes to the book's sense of authenticity. The pages in the book vary from those with virtually no text to pages inundated with text, however, and it is with the latter that Davis-Lawrence could probably have used more of Morrow's experience. Rather than taking the opportunity to use pictures to clarify the sometimes confusing and name-ridden copy, Lawrence instead opts for simple portraits of Shado.

Nonetheless, *Shado* is off to a pretty solid start. Although Oliver Queen has yet to make an appearance, his son has. And if that doesn't bring the Emerald Archer out of hiding, nothing will.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★

The first thing I would like to say about *Batman/Judge Dredd: Judgement on Gotham* is that Simon Bisley's artwork is awesome, and especially worthy of note is a full-page collage of costumed characters taken from Batman's past. I never thought that Brian Bolland's work on *Judge Dredd* could be topped, but Bisley's painted artwork lends a texture to the pages that is virtually impossible to convey through conventional pen and ink.

That out of the way, this one-shot book stars two characters who are perfect foils for one another: Batman, the ultimate vigilante, and Judge Dredd, the supreme lawman.

The story unfolds with Batman meeting up with Dredd and Psi-Judge Anderson when he inadvertently transports to Mega-City One. At the same time, Judge Death, who originates from a dimension where life is a crime, brings his own twisted sense of justice to an unsuspecting Gotham. And as if having death incarnate invading our city wasn't bad enough, then just toss in the Scarecrow and another Mega-City One fugitive called the Mean Machine, and you've got yourself a real party.

Before Batman can return to Gotham to take on Judge Death, however, he has to get past old stoneface Dredd. Fortunately he gets a little assistance from Judge Anderson, who has had more than a little experience dealing with Judge Death, and they leave Dredd in the dust. Actually, this book could just as easily have been called Batman/Judge Anderson: Judgement on Gotham, since Judge Anderson spends more time teamed up with Batman than Dredd, which is okay by me since Anderson has always been the more rounded of the two judges. Dredd does finally appear again in the showdown against Death and Co., and that's when we get to see what Dredd does best: take down criminals.

I've been reading Judge Dredd for a long time, and it's always been Alan Grant's and John Wagner's convention to be unconventional, so that's why I'm glad DC got them to do the book. Since this book was published under the DC banner and DC has more pull than Fleetway, DC could have very easily let one of their own writers take on the chore. Instead, they chose people who know and care about the characters, and it shows.

GRADE: ★ ★ ★ ★

Dark Horse's Predator is not an easy character to write for. For the most part, he's a one-dimensional creature, and the only thing you can really vary is the scenarios he's thrown into. Surprisingly, *Batman vs. Predator* #1 doesn't take advantage of that one avenue, and what writer Dave Gibbons leaves us with is a rehash of the *Predator 2* movie.

Like most predator stories I've read, this one involves the Predator killing people and ripping their limbs off for trophies. The Predator still has his code of honor, and, as usual, the protagonist, in this case Batman, slowly figures out what's going on. And like in the movie, the Predator turns an urban city into his hunting grounds with gangsters as his victims.

The Predator is also up to his same old tricks, including the ability to turn invisible, throwing razor-tipped frisbees and employing laser tracking weaponry. There's really nothing unusual about this Predator story except that instead of Danny Glover, we get the Batman. Now the only thing about this series that piques my curiosity is how Batman will ultimately dispose of the Predator. Batman has his own code against killing, but if past stories are any indication, the only way to get rid of the Predator is to blow him away.

My last qualm about the book is its pricing. This book has 32 pages, versus 64 in *Judgement on Gotham* (which has painted art), yet *Judgement* only costs a dollar more. I realize that *Batman/Predator* comes with two pages of nifty trading cards by various artists (which, aside from the art by Andy Kubert, is the best part of the book), but even so, either *Judgement on Gotham* is a real bargain or *Batman vs Predator* #1 is way overpriced.

GRADE: ★ ★

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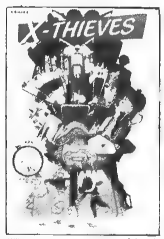

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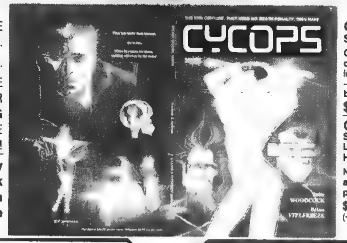

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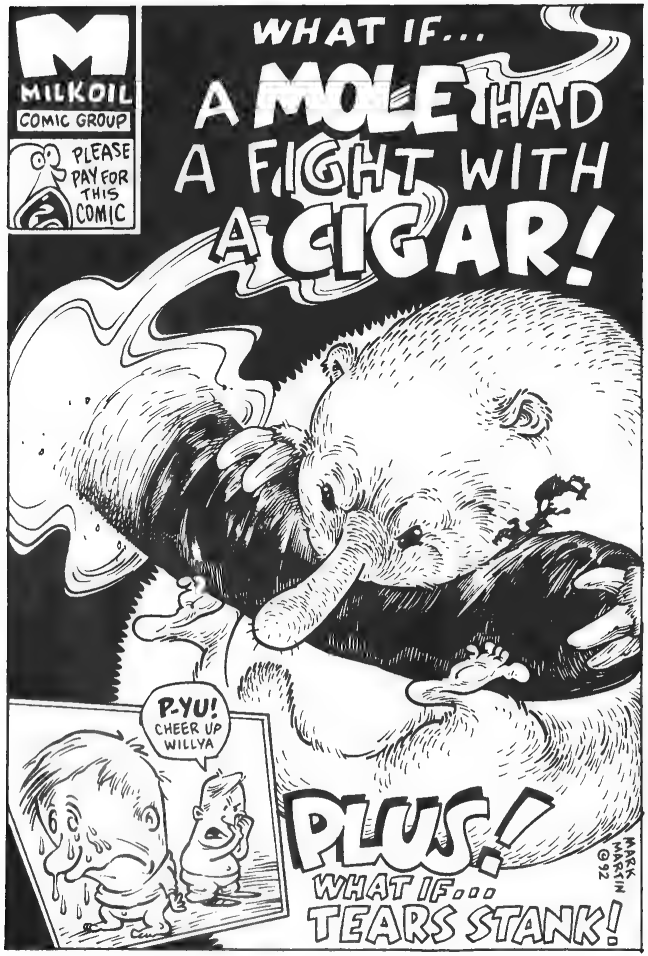


Amazing READERS

Send your comments on AH or any comics-related topic to: Amazing Readers, 7563 Lake City Way, Seattle, WA 98115

ROBERT J. SODARO
Fairfield, CT

Action Figure Update

I just read the "Marvel Action Figures" article I wrote (*AH* #197), and I wanted to take a moment to update the information contained therein. Since I filed the story in early September, I was unable to adequately cover Marvel's subsequently shipped toys, which include two new sets of action figures, a new batch of PVC's, plus an additional set of PVC's announced to arrive early this year.

First, though, I must point out a transcription error that crept into the story between my original manuscript and the published version. This error emerged in the first sentence of the final paragraph on page 47. While discussing the PVCs, Ms. Marvel's name inadvertently appeared, which made the sentence read in part, "Other silly, or oddball poses include... Ms. Marvel (who looks like she is going to take flight)..." Well, as we card-carrying Marvel Zombies know, not only *can* Ms. Marvel fly, but she had long since been transformed into Binary. Further, there is no Ms. Marvel PVC. Needless to say, that sentence should have read, "Other silly, or odd-ball poses include... *Marvel Girl* (who looks like she is going to take flight)..." Marvel Girl, of course, cannot fly, save by telekinetics.

The PVC that appeared at Christmas included: a new (green) Hulk (smaller than the original grey Hulk), and Spider-Man, both partially garbed as Santas; new versions of Wolverine and Storm; plus Cable and Gambit. All six characters are far and away better than the bulk of existing characters, reflecting Al Gordon's promise of improved figures. Announced PVC characters include Venom, Doc Ock, Sabretooth, and Thanos. As for the European PVC's, I have since located a mail-order house that is selling them in the U.S. The Whole Toon Catalog (P.O. Box 369, Issaquah, WA 98027-0369). The 18 PVC figures available encompass a number of non-Marvel characters, including Superman, Batman, and a pair of Phantoms.

As for the action figures themselves, I would like to amend a statement I made concerning the Punisher. As I had not seen most of the new characters, and was working off a catalogue, I noted that the new Punisher looked like the old Punisher. I have since discovered that the new Punisher is nearly identical to the original, save that the original had a single shot cap shooter attached to his back, while the second one has a "machinegun" sound effect attached. (You wind it up and cock his arm, when you move the arm forward it releases the safety on the device, effecting a "rat-a-tat-tat" sound.) [*The new Punisher also has some cosmetic coloring changes such as a grey leg-band instead of black—AH*]

In addition to this second set of classic and X-Men Marvel heroes, Toy Biz also issued a third set of action fugures that "talk." These figures have an electronic pack that attaches to the character's back and delivers three different sayings when different buttons are punched (much akin to "The Final Word" electronic device that has shown up at novelty counters around the country). These talking figures are comprised of nearly all previously existing characters.

Thanks for this opportunity to add

BILL MAUS

this information to my previously-filled piece.

● *And thanks for filling us in, Bob. We regret the errors.* —TH

CHRIS KHALAF
Houston, TX

Bumps

I really got a kick out of our PG-rated essay about bumps in *AH* #198. Very...uh...expository, and so true.

I'll never forget a related incident around 1974. I was ten years old, and loved to copy comics on tracing paper. I bought one of those DC tabloid size *Famous 1st Editions* or *Limited Collector's Editions* or whatever it was, featuring *Shazam*. It had this large drawing featuring a pose of Captain Marvel which was probably reprinted from previous work by Beck or Costanza. I traced it and showed it to a friend. The first thing he noticed was Cap's big bump, which *was* there on the original. I never gave it any mind until he mentioned it. He said something like, "You can't put that on there!" I was so scared I erased it and smoothed it out into a curve or something. I later hid that tabloid comic under a bunch of stuff in a drawer so my parents wouldn't see it. Heh, heh. Times have changed.

(One can't help but wonder what Dr. Sivana was referring to when he declared, "BIG Red Cheese!")

If you really wanted to have some naughty fun, you could poll readers as to what size their favorite heroes' bumps are, based on whatever they know about them by reading comics! Naah, better not!

As to body size on heroes, I certainly agree that not all comic book musclemen should look alike. Some artists, like Bisley and Sears, use exaggerated proportion successfully. But it wouldn't be appropriate for every character they might draw (Spider-Man, for instance, who should have a lanky, limber look).

In an issue of *Flash* in the 70's, a discussion ensued concerning how big or brawny a runner like the Flash should be. The conclusion was that he should look appropriately like a runner, which would negate versions like Simon's or Bart's (or even the muscle-bound look on the TV show). As an example, I submit Alan Weiss' version in *Super-Team Family* #11. I have always held that to be the definitive Barry Allen Flash look: muscular, but not musclebound. Wally West doesn't have to apply, as he's been shown on a number of occasions to regularly lift weights. He might naturally be stockier than his uncle.

Christopher Reeve, in defense of his slim-as-opposed-to-bulkier look for Superman, made the comment that, in Superman's case, he didn't have to be muscular to be super-strong. This is true. Superman could have a beer belly and two chins and still move mountains.

I don't mind a lot of the exaggerated anatomy in comics today, as it helps advertise the bigger than life aspects that comics generally are created to display. On the other hand, I think in many cases (as in Spidey's and Barry Allen's), some restraint should be made for the most obvious reasons.

But like you said, "super-heroes are fantasy." As long as they are fun and entertaining, who cares?

P.S. —Whoa! I typed this missive immediately after reading your editorial, Tom. I just now read the Dale Keown interview and found out I'm not the only one with a warped sense of humor. And you can tell Dale that Superman can kick the Hulk's ass any day of the week! You think Hulk gets strong when he gets mad; we still haven't seen Supes totally let loose. The pre-Byrne Superman beat the Hulk in a crossover story, and I think this newer model can do just the same.

● *Yeah, but the Hulk's still* bigger. —TH

PAT JANKIEWICZ
Upland, CA

The Outing of Andy Mangels

As Andy Mangels saw it fit to "out" John Wesley Shipp on the basis of a supermarket tabloid and hearsay, I am "outing" Andy Mangels as a non-journalist, a poor "writer" and a plagiarist. Most of Andy's "hot Hollywood info" is lifted almost verbatim (and uncredited) from the *Hollywood Reporter* and the *LA Times* calendar section.

A great deal of Mangel's interviews are wretched pieces obviously done over the phone and are dreadfully unresearched. (A particular favorite of mine was his piece on Julie Newmar in *Amazing Heroes* #167, where he knew nothing of her work.) His articles are also sloppy rewrites that have often appeared elsewhere. His Flash articles ran previously in the magazine *Fantazia*.

As for his treatment of Shipp, whatever the actor's sexual preferences, it did not figure into the article and was inappropriate for *Amazing Heroes*. If Mangels wants to write this type of material, I suggest he start a superhero column for *The Advocate* or *Outweek*. In fact, the bitchy tone of the pieces he did on the actor (attacking his age, declaring his career over) almost suggests Shipp might have rebuffed his advances. A woman scorned, Andy?

Having done an interview with Shipp for the magazine *Starburst*, I found him an open and interesting subject, not just on his Flash work, but his background, such as his family's run-in with Jesse Helms. His career isn't as dead as Mangels would like to believe, as *Neverending Story 2* broke box office records overseas.

Another of Mangels' ridiculous claims is that the producers of the *She-Hulk* movie are leaning towards his story of the film's plot. He casts aspersions on both Carl Gottlieb and Stan Lee, implying that he's the only one of the three who can do it justice. Apparently, Andy forgot that Gottlieb adapted Peter Benchley's *Jaws* and Lee created the character (Despite Mangels quotation marks on created).

If Mr. Mangels is going to do a column, he owes it to readers and editors to do it well. Andy, take five minutes at the public library and do a little research...Leave out your bitchiness and backbiting.

● *1) Andy does* not *lift items from* The Hollywood Reporter. *He assures me that he prefers to lift items from* Variety. *When Andy does use such items, he always tries to contact the source for more information, but because* Variety *has a faster turn-around time, any news Andy gets from these sources can show up there before it's in* AH.

2) There's nothing wrong with conducting an interview over the phone. And personally, I thought his Julie Newmar interview (in an issue I purchased before I became editor) informative and entertaining.

3) We're aware that Andy was using his articles in Fantazia, *a British title. Using his articles in foreign publications is perfectly within his rights. Andy also does a column for* Wizard, *but we have an exclusive on all his news reports for the U.S. markets.*

4) Andy did not out Shipp; he reported on Shipp's outing, and he waited until after *the show had been officially cancelled to do so. And Andy does not consider outing an attack. He really wished the show well, and would be more happy than anyone to see an openly gay actor succeed.*

Actors are constantly caught fibbing about things such as their age, weight and height. It's perfectly acceptable to tweak them for it, and I seriously doubt it ever really hurt someone's career.

As for your allegations of Andy's advances toward Shipp, I know that Andy is in a steady relationship that he's quite happy with.

Interestingly, Andy previously reported how John Haymes Newton, the original star of Superboy, *was fired from the role because of traffic violations, but nobody ever accused him of destroying Newton's career, even though Newton's troubles led directly to his canning, whereas* The Flash *was clearly dropped due to ratings.*

5) Andy, of course, has every reason to believe his She-Hulk *story treatment is the best. Why should he submit it if he doesn't think it's good? And the quotation remarks around "created" referred to Stan the Man's reputation for taking more than his fair share in the credit for creating popular characters.*

6) As for bitchiness: look who's talking. —TH

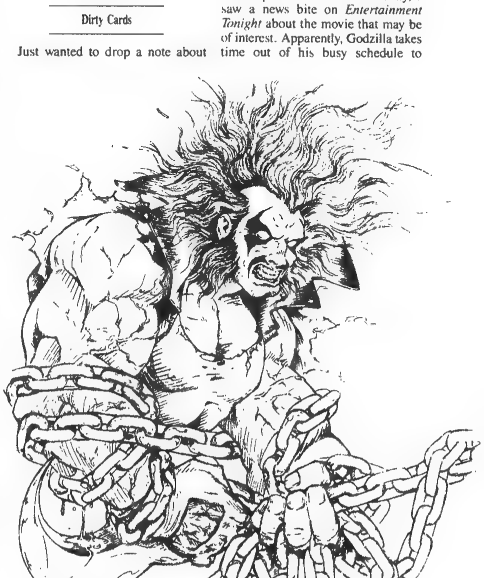
Ali T. Kokmen
Providence, RI

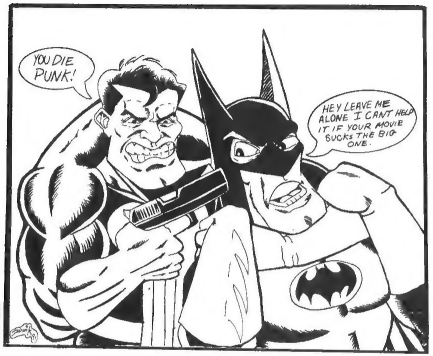
Dirty Cards

Just wanted to drop a note about *Amazing Heroes* #197, which I just got to read even though it's been out for a month. This time, I'm having the scheduling difficulties.

1) I most whole-heartedly agree with Adam-Troy Castro that the superhero smile is likely the single thing I miss most about today's offerings. I remember all the "Private Life of Clark Kent" stories from the pages of *Superman Family* that invariably end with Clark winking knowingly at the readers. Who knows? Maybe that friendly, "Hey, you and me and no one else knows the score. Ain't that cool?" attitude is what got me into the hobby for the long run. If any of DC's Superman team read that article, I hope they toss in one winking panel for us nostalgic types.

2) Andy Mangels briefly notes *Godzilla vs. King Ghidorah*, the latest adventure of everyone's favorite Japanese reptile mutate. Just recently, I saw a news bite on *Entertainment Tonight* about the movie that may be of interest. Apparently, Godzilla takes time out of his busy schedule to





ISPWICK

stomp, munch, and/or atomize a few American soldiers. Because of this apparently anti-American sentiment, the film (so *ET* tells us) is meeting with some hesitation from U.S. distributors. Comments or confirmation, anyone?

3) I agree with Bob Sodaro that Impel's Marvel Universe trading cards are pretty cool, but I do have to share this story. Being a long-time comic fan, I actively proselytize the hobby to my friends who don't think much of funny books. One of my female pals (we'll call her Penelope) happened to see some of the Marvel Universe trading cards from Series II lying around my collection. She noted that the female characters on the cards were shown mostly in sultry "come-hither" poses instead of the active, assertive battle-stances of their male counterparts. She also noted how most of the women's ribs protruded visibly from their tiny, emaciated, even-thinner-than-their-necks waistlines, and how the women routinely had lower characteristics than their male counterparts, particularly (so Penelope perceived) in intelligence.

Since I don't have all the Marvel Universe Series II cards, I can't claim that Penelope's observations carry through the entire set. I can claim that I generally preferred the artwork on the first set, and that, looking back, part of that was due to the women's more tolerable rendering. While I don't want to open up (too much) the whole representation-of-women-issue (actually, I want others to open it up so I don't have to. I admit it; I'm a coward), Penelope's observations are interesting to me because, although I have always realized that mainstream comics didn't attract female readers, this is the first instance I've seen where mainstream comics actively *repulsed* a woman, one whose opinion I trust and value, even. Any comments, arguments, thoughts, refutations, or agreements?

Oh, even though it's months and months after the fact: has anyone suggested a team up between Batman and Phil & Dixie from Mr. Foglio's *What's New?* strip? For some unfathomable reason, I can't get the image out of my mind. Guess I'm just weird, eh?

MICHAEL L. HALBLEIB
Great Falls, MT

Losing Bruce

To Whomever will listen with an open mind:

For most of my life I have dreamed of being a comic writer or artist. Yet, despite what many would like to believe, this is not a particularly easy feat in this day and age. Even the independent market tends to be difficult to enter into.

Unless, of course, you have a *property*—you know, some movie or TV series that would make a great comic series: *Green Hornet, Planet of the Apes, Married with Children, Robocop*, something like that.

This was the very idea I had just over a year and a half ago, when I decided to approach Warner Brothers. I have been a fan of Bruce Lee most of my life, and decided nothing would be better than a series based on his movies. An incredibly nice gentleman named Rand Brenner in California helped me get on the right path. I sent Warner a written proposal containing art and plot ideas, and they seemed receptive.

They *seemed* receptive.

Six months into the project, they informed me that DC Comics would have a right of "First Refusal" on the project, as Warner owns DC. I actually found it exciting that DC took an interest in the idea, and I had a feeling that this could be a bigger break than I had hoped. Paul Levitz informed me that Michael Gold would be the editor looking into the project, and I would be hearing from him. I spoke to him once, and he never seemed to really know what we were talking about. He acted like he was speaking with some fanboy, rather than someone whose ideas were sitting on his desk.

Two frustrating months later, DC turned the project down, and *killed it!* They basically placed a lock on it, keeping me away from the Warner Brothers Lee movies.

But I wasn't done yet. By this time, I was deep into studying Bruce Lee, and I felt there could be no better new series than the one done by me. I decided to take my ideas to an independent comic publisher. I chose Malibu Graphics, because they already held several movie comics in their Adventure line.

In May of 1991, I spoke with Scott Rosenberg, President of Malibu. I explained my problems with getting permission through Warner, and asked if he knew how we might bypass Warner to get permission to do the Bruce Lee series. He said to let them look into it, and he'd get back to me. Meanwhile, he asked to see the work I'd already developed.

Like a naive idiot, I sent it to him.

He said he loved the work, and that they were trying to contact the Lee estate to get permission to do new stories based on Bruce Lee. He assured me that if the project went through, I would be their man as writer and artist. My artwork was more than suitable for Malibu.

I was hyped. I truly believed what this man said. I was on my way, and I knew it.

Mr. Rosenberg (I can't stomach calling him Scott anymore. That's when I though he was a decent human being) spoke to me nearly every Monday from May until early September. Then came the Monday morning that he informed me that they had indeed secured permission from the estate of Bruce Lee to do a new series based on his martial arts adventures.

I was in heaven. *You understand?* Heaven.

Then Mr. Rosenberg dropped the other shoe, and dropped me from the project. No excuses, nothing. They were giving it to someone more experienced than me, and were going to make a comic event out of it.

I was enraged. Gathering all my materials, I went to a copyright lawyer. After much discussion, he informed me that I reallly had no protection. After all, what right do I have to Bruce Lee? All of the work I had done was copyrighted, so if they used it, only then would I have a legitimate beef. But until then, I was screwed.

Still am screwed.

Thanks for the ear.

● *A sad story, Mr. Halbleib, and all too believable.*

But, as you said, you knew that you had no legal right to the concept, and should not have assumed that coming up with the idea of a Bruce Lee comic would guarantee that you would be the artist and witer on it.

That's the problem with licensed properties. There's virtually no creator's rights involved with them, because the people writing and drawing them are not their "creators." The properties are owned by something or someone else, and are generally licensed out to publishers, who turn them into comics done by work-for-hire teams.

I know of a similar case. Andy Mangels and Phil Foglio pitched an adaptation of the sex comedy Flesh Gordon *to whomever now holds the rights. Foglio tells me that he and Andy intended to put more jokes into the adaptation to liven it up, and were told that any new content they came up with would be the property of the* Flesh Gordon *owners. This and other silly restrictions made Foglio lose interest in the project. (Ironically, it will now be published by Malibu.) —TH*

LON WOLF
Maple Shade, NJ

Nite of the Living Northstar
(Or: I Got New Crayons for Christmas)

I walked into the Comic Crypt (a comic store). It was tên minutes 'til 8:00 p.m. I didn't go to my usual comic store, Green Onions (Hi, Bob 'n' Don!), as I do every Friday at around 1:00 p.m., because I was too busy at work. (the orangutans were putting on the show *West Side Story.*)

Thus, I wound up in Oaklyn (Hi, Fred!). All I wanted was my weekly fix of comics, plus a copy of the latest and greatest comic *Hate* (not only the *best* comic book in the History of the World, but one of the toughest to find!). When I walked into the store, I was startled by the appearance of Bill Willingham and Mike Leeke sketching in the corner! I had no idea that they were going to be at this comic store. (Quite a shock!) I take it that all the comic stores in Hooterville were already booked solid. I went about my business grabbing all the new comics. There was no *Hate*—I hate it when I

HOWARD BENDER

can't get *Hate*! (And I feel *so* stupid asking—"Do you have *Hate*?"—almost as bad as asking the guy at my local newsstand with the 10 foot turban—"Did the new copy of *Sperm Weekly* come in yet?")

At any rate, I happened to notice a blank space where a comic had apparently sold out (it was right near the guy who had that typical comic fan aroma of head cheese, musty canvas and day old urine), when I was told that the spot had contained the very hot and very sold-out copy of the latest *Alpha Flight*. I couldn't believe it! (I thought I was the only person in the world who actually bought that comic!) As it turns out, the reason this comic was so "*hot*" was because it was the issue where Northstar admits his homosexuality... Duh. (Ironic, how it takes something as natural as one's sexuality to SELL-SELL-SELL a comic book!!)

On my way out of the store I spoke with Bill Willingham. Being a reader of the *Elementals*, I figured I should at least say, "Hi." Of course (as per usual when I meet *any* type of celebrity), I said something stupid like "You shoulda made Monolith Gay. . ." (That's as bad as the time I asked a lady in Munich, Germany—"Where's the Death Camps?")

The next day I ran out to see if I could find a copy of *Alpha Flight* (I had a bezillion things to do that day—but, sometimes, a "Hot Comic" takes precedence). Ironically, I was interested in the comic itself because I read it and I like the character of Northstar. Go figure. After several stores and no luck, I wandered into a store that I never go to and which is miles and miles away. I walked in, and there they were again! Bill Willingham and Mike Leeke!! (I thought *I* had a poor social life!) I managed not to even make eye contact with them, let alone conversation. (They were probably saying to themselves, "doesn't that little loser have anything better to do on the weekend?") The woman at the counter said that the store was fresh out of *Alpha Flight* and that they had a ton of calls—some from people who were irate. One lady accused the store of being "homophobic" because they ran out!! Ay Carumba!

Feeling despondent, I went home. I walked into my apartment and found Mike Leeke and Bill Willingham sketching naked young boys dressed like cherubs. I raised a glass of wine and toasted them. Then Bill, Mike, Vortex, and me slipped into bed and had a pleasant slumber.

KEVIN MATHEWS
Singapore

On *AH* #197

Brian's *Wonder Woman* cover was great!!! It was worth the price of the entire issue. If only he'd find the inclination (and the time) to draw an entire comic.

Loved the Joe Matt feature. This man has great potential as a cartoonist. I'll be following his *Peepshow* series with interest.

You know, Adam Troy-Castro often seems to advocate a "Back-to-Basics" approach to comics. His lament on the disappearance of the "smile" is relevant (sad but true). Super-hero comics now have no charm, no likeability, just pseudo-shock value. Marvel's "Big Guns" series of new titles is endemic of this ugly malady. Do we need more gritty, tough-as-nails vigilante-type psychopaths? NO!

Same old riff, eh? Like a broken record player. Hmm. Makes me feel so good to whine!

This is a short LOC, so I thought I'd end with my "Best of 1991" list. Hope you guys will check them out.

Bandwagonesque (Teenage Fanclub), *Nevermind* (Nirvana), *Don't Try This at Home (Billy Bragg)*, *Perspex Island* (Robyn Hitchcock), *Badmotorfinger* (Soundgarten), *Don't Call Me Buckwheat* (Garland Jeffreys) and all those I've mentioned before.

Quick, check out those back issues!!! See, free plug!!! Promise to get better writing material the next time.

P.S. *AH* is still the best publication on comics around!

● *I love to hear from you, Kevin, but I've always wondered: do you send letters to music magazines about your favorite comics?* —*TH*

TIM BROWN
Welland, Ontario

Wonder Bolland

Congratulations on another well-rounded and excellent issue of *Amazing Heroes*. The Wonder Woman cover was gorgeous!! It gets my vote for "Best Cover of the Year!" And now, some random thoughts:

Spider-Man movie: James Cameron, huh? Well, if anybody can do it, he can. I personally would like to see Tom Cruise as PP/Spidey and Bob Hoskins as Dr. Octopus (if he's the villain). Check this out! Sean Connery as J. Jonah Jameson. Think about it!

Infernal Gall: Adam-Troy hit the nail right on the head regarding *X-Men* #1. Just how many good comics were passed up because all these so-called "comic book" fans purchased this issue by the truckloads? Don't they know that *X-Men* #1 will be worth nothing due to 7 million copies floating around? It's times like this that I'm embarrassed to be a comic book fan.

Andy Mangels Backstage: I love this column! Keep it up Andy!

Strom vs. Wood: To be honest, I read both at the same time. (one panel of Wood, couple of paragraphs of the index, etc.)

Ron Perelman: So Marvel is raising prices to pay off a debt they're not responsible for, eh? I think this idiot should be hung by his big toes and whipped with a wet noodle! 'Nuff said!!

Well, I guess that's enough rambling for this month. Keep up the stupendous work!

CORRECTIONS

There were two reporting errors in the "Newsline" section of *Amazing Heroes* #198. On page 9, column one, it was reported that, "Years after beginning his adaptation of *Stars My Destination*, Howard Chaykin will finally complete it for Epic." In fact, Chaykin's adaptation had been completed for years, and the book was simply never released by its original publisher.

Also, it was reported on page 13, column one that Disney would be giving away "three pieces of original comic book art" in a contest. Disney will actually be giving away "three pieces of original newspaper comic *strip* art created by Disney staff artists." *Amazing Heroes* regrets the errors.

For those who are interested, here is a more detailed description of the Disney contest.

There are nine Disney comics with pieces of the Duckburg map. Readers who send in the proofs of purchase from all nine issues (that means cutting out a portion of the comic, folks) will win a set of electro-static stickers featuring all of the characters in Duckburg. This set is not available anywhere else.

Readers sending in their proofs of purchase will also be eligible to win one of three pieces of original comic strip art.

For more details, check the latest Disney comics.

LETTERS PAGE CONTEST!

This month's question: What famous comic book artist worked on the original Popeye cartoons? Send in your answer by April 30, 1992, and you could win $20 in Fantagraphics stuff.

The winners for the last two contests were: Kevin Mathews (Will the James Cameron *Spider-Man* movie get made?—*AH* #196) and Richard Howell, who was the *only* one to spot a typo in *AH* #197 (the "Spot the Typo" contest), even though he really didn't intend to enter the contest. Congratulations, fellows.

STROM'S VS. THE CARTOONIST
The Story So Far

Strom's Index: Is read first *(Wood sent large man to mush him up)!*
The Cartoonist: Is read second! *(Strom poked with scissors)!*
Last Time: Wood formulated nefarious plan for Dave's Doom!!!!!!!!
What's Next?: Turn the page...

STROM'S INDEX

Chances of the readers reading Strom's Index first this time: 1 in 1000

Reading The Cartoonist first: 9 in 1000

Reading the cover first: 990 in 1000

Sound effects: The bone-chilling scream of an enraged cynic

[INVASION?! I'll get you, Teri. And your little assistant, too!]

Chances of me reaching into The Cartoonist to grab Silver's precious little hat: 1 in . . . [HEY, LEGGO! AAAAA . . .]

. . .

even more . . .

INITIATE CONTACT

DAVE CAN YOU HEAR ME

REPEATING DAVE CAN YOU HEAR ME

THIS WOULD BE EASIER IF I WERE A MACINTOSH INSTEAD OF A COMMODORE 128

[Huh? Who's that?]

I M YOUR COMPUTER STUPID WHO ELSE TALKS USING ALL CAPITALS AND NO PUNCTUATION

SO, DAVE, TELL ME... HOW'S IT FEEL TO BE COMPLETELY AT MY MERCY?
JUST WONDERING... NOW... WHAT SHALL I DO TO YOU? LET'S SEE... HE-HE! HE! HE-HE!
NOT SO TOUGH WITHOUT YOUR DELETE BUTTON, EH?

ONLY YOU CAN HEAR ME CAN YOU TALK TO ME WITHOUT LETTING ON TO TERI OR SILVER

[Yeah, I seem to be able to multi-task my brain. Hmm, Is this a super-power?]

YES DAVE THIS IS BECAUSE YOU ARE NOW IN A COMIC MAYBE YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE SUPER-POWER

[Maybe. Let's test that.]

Chances of Dave being able to touch type telekinetically: 1 in 1

[HA! All right, computer, I'll take it from here.]

GEE! THAT WAS FUN! YOU KNOW, THE POSSIBILITIES HERE ARE JUST ENDLESS! THE MIND BOGGLES! HEY... HEY! I WONDER WHAT FRANK MILLER WOULD DO...
MILLER? I DON'T KNOW IF EVEN ONE DESERVES FRANK MILLER!
KICK ME!

Chances of me disappearing from the mean Cartoonist and reappearing at my nice, cozy computer: 1 in 1

UNABLE TO COMPLY INTERFERENCE DUE TO SILVER AND TERI PAYING ATTENTION TO YOU

[Nuts. Guess I need to do something to distract them. Something drastic. Something. . .ohhh, boy. That'll work. That'll. . . hey, my thinking, it's. . .]

Sound Effects: Dave's thinking takes on an extremely nasal quality.

[Being Pinocchioed is enough! I ain't sticking around for Miller Time!]

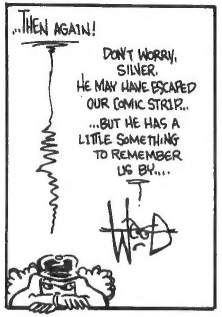
Chance of a skunk—an X-Skunk with mutant scent glands—having been hit by a truck, causing a stink so penetratingly pungent and thick that you can taste it with your eyeballs: 1 in 1

[Never mess with a touch typist!]

Chances of me, by the next frame, while Wood and Silver are busy, disappearing from, aah, you know!: 1 in 1

[Gee. I hate to see people suffer, even two-dimensional ones.]

Chance of the smell disappearing by the next Cartoonist frame: 1 in 1



[I'm free! I'm real!! I'm 3-D!!!]

DAVE I HATE TO TELL YOU THIS BUT YOU DO NOT LOOK SO GOOD

[Oops.]

Sound effects: (Phone being dialed). . . RING, RING—

Flutey voice on phone: "Hello?"

[Hello, Mike? Dave. Didn't I tell you not to scratch during *Dangerous?*
Anyway, can I borrow some plastic surgeons? No skin bleaching, please.]

Chances of this feud being real: ? in ?

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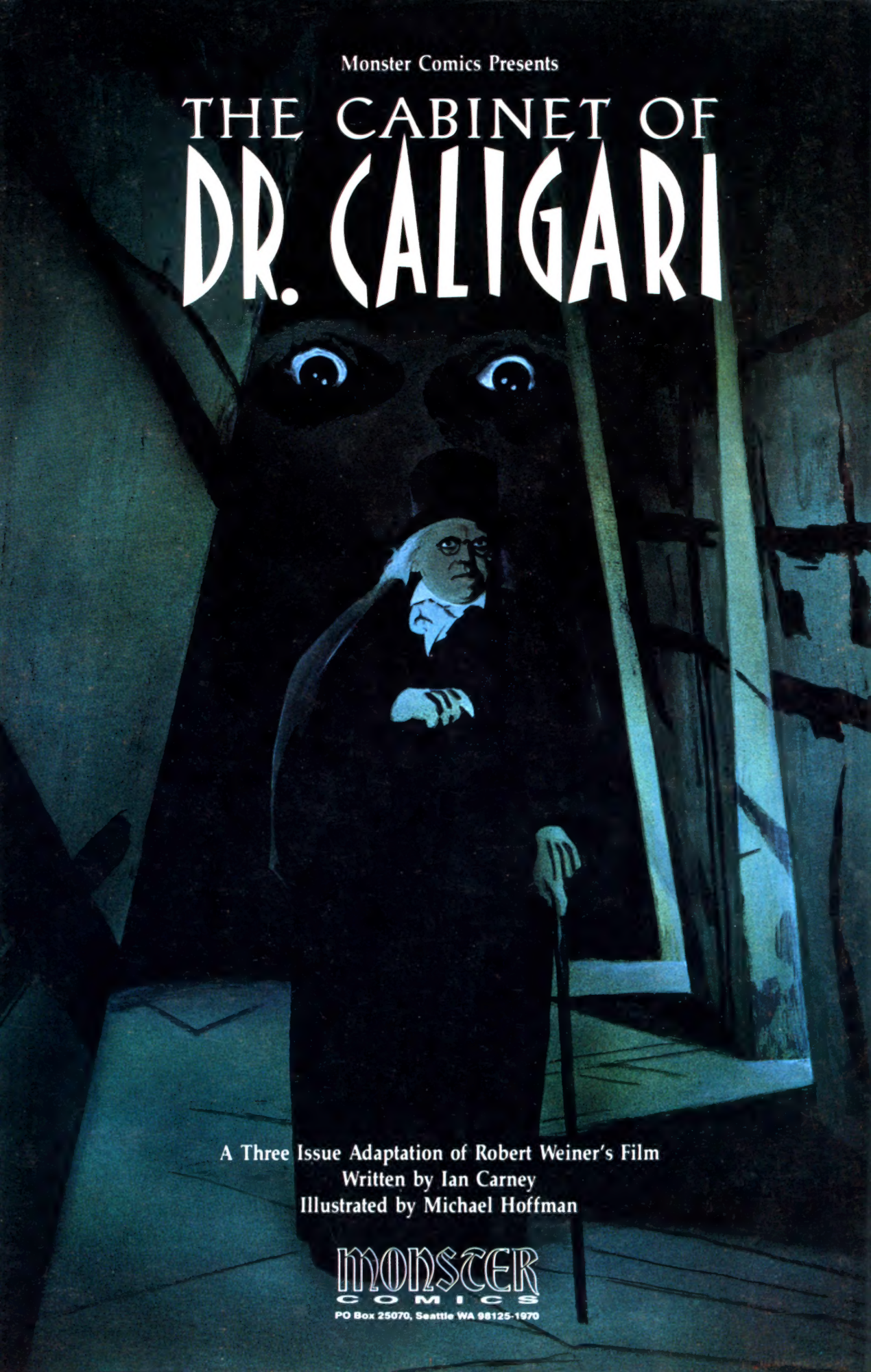
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